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Abstract

NORTHERN SONG REFLECTIONS ON THE TANG

Jeffrey Rice

Victor Mair

In the mid-eleventh century Chinese intellectuals argued about history, and left their competing narratives to us in print. They contested how history should be written, and what relevant lessons ought to be adapted to the changing society of Song 宋 (960-1279) dynasty China. They were particularly concerned with the history of the long-lasting Tang 唐 (618-907) dynasty. They revised the official history of the Tang on a variety of levels: they used primary sources differently to analyze evidence, developed a new literary language to write historical prose, employed editorial critiques differently to draw political morals by analogy to historical events, and harnessed new print technology to disseminate their views to a wider audience. This dissertation analyzes the revisions to the history of the Tang produced in the eleventh century on each of these levels: historiography, linguistics, politics, and print culture. These elements all functioned to reinvent the ancient ideal of the Confucian scholar in terms that advanced the interests of the burgeoning class of literati officials in Northern Song China.

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**NORTHERN SONG REFLECTIONS
ON THE TANG**

Jeffrey Rice

A DISSERTATION

in

East Asian Languages and Civilizations

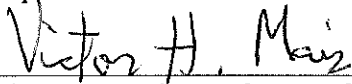
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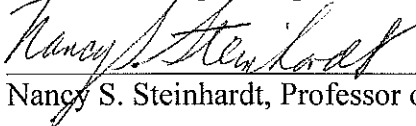
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In the mid-eleventh century Chinese intellectuals argued about history, and left their competing narratives to us in print. They contested how history should be written, and what relevant lessons ought to be adapted to the changing society of Song 宋 (960-1279) dynasty China. They were particularly concerned with the history of the long-lasting Tang 唐 (618-907) dynasty. They revised the official history of the Tang on a variety of levels: they used primary sources differently to analyze evidence, developed a new literary language to write historical prose, employed editorial critiques differently to draw political morals by analogy to historical events, and harnessed new print technology to disseminate their views to a wider audience. This dissertation analyzes the revisions to the history of the Tang produced in the eleventh century on each of these levels: historiography, linguistics, politics, and print culture. These elements all functioned to reinvent the ancient ideal of the Confucian scholar in terms that advanced the interests of the burgeoning class of literati officials in Northern Song China.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgment.....	ii
Abstract.....	iii
List of Tables.....	v
Chapter 1: Northern Song Reflections on the Tang.....	1
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Overview of Methods and Goals.....	9
1.3 Preliminary Conclusions.....	17
Chapter 2: Historical Narrative and the Institutions and Sources for the Writing of Dynastic Histories in Medieval China.....	18
2.1 The textual history of the first National History of the Tang.....	21
2.2 Secondary research on Song historiography.....	26
2.3 Extant Primary Sources Used in this Study.....	28
2.4 Conclusions.....	59
Chapter 3: Linguistics, Historiography and the Language of Guwen 古文 Ancient Style Prose.....	61
3.1 The Ancient Style Movement from Han Yu to Ouyang Xiu.....	62
3.2 Syntax and the Language of the New Tang History.....	77
3.3 Eleventh-century ancient style and the writing of Han Yu.....	111
3.4 Sociolinguistics and Historical Syntax.....	121
3.5 Conclusions.....	125
Chapter 4: The Politics of Writing Tang History in the 11th Century, From Qingli (1041- 1049) to Chongning (1102-1106).....	127
4.1 The Moral and Political Roles of Chinese History	128
4.2 Tang Taizong in Song Historical Criticism.....	134
4.3 Historical Analogism.....	137
4.4 Political Conflict in Historical Criticism.....	140
Chapter 5: The Work of History in the Age of Print.....	173
5.1 The Growth of Commercial Printing in China.....	174
5.2 The History of the Book in the West.....	182
5.3 Similar effects of printing in China and in the West.....	187
List of Abbreviations.....	200
Appendix 1.....	201
Appendix 2	202
Appendix 3.....	206
Appendix 4.....	213
Bibliography.....	218
Primary Sources.....	218
Secondary Sources.....	219
Index.....	258

List of Tables

Table 3.1: Biographies of Chu Suiliang	207
Table 3.2 Chart Comparing Uses of yu in Selected Biographies from the Old Tang History (JTS) and the New Tang History (XTS).....	211

Chapter 1: Northern Song Reflections on the Tang

1.1 Introduction

In the mid-eleventh century Chinese intellectuals argued about history, and left their competing narratives to us in print. They contested how history should be written, and what relevant lessons ought to be adapted to the changing society of Song 宋 (960-1279) dynasty China. They were particularly concerned with the history of the long-lasting Tang 唐 (618-907) dynasty. In 1044 the Song Emperor Renzong 仁宗 (reigned 1022-1063) commissioned a complete revision of the *Tang shu* 唐書 (Old Tang History), which had been written a hundred years earlier. In both content and prose style, this revised *Xin Tang shu* 新唐書 (New Tang History) purported to reclaim ancient values that predated and superseded the Tang. Contemporaneously, new genres of unofficial historical writing gained popularity, including the genre of historical criticism (*shi ping* 史評).

The Later Jin 後晉 dynasty (936-946) was the third of the Five Dynasties to briefly rule north China between the disintegration of the Tang and the founding of the Song. From 941 to 945 Liu Xu 劉昫 (887–946) oversaw the compilation of the *History of the Tang* at the Later Jin court. One hundred years later, after the Song dynasty had reunited the heartland of China, some among the political class began to reevaluate the official history of the Tang and to challenge the merits of the Tang emperors as models for emulation. During the Qingli reforms of 1043-1045, Emperor Renzong commissioned Ouyang Xiu to begin revising the *Old Tang History*. While Ouyang Xiu and his editorial board

were revising the official dynastic history, a lesser-known contemporary, Sun Fu, was privately voicing his own opinions on Tang history.

In the preface to his *Discussions and Judgments on Tang History*, Sun Fu argues that when writing history, blame for past mistakes should be as detailed as praise for past successes, rather than condemning bad ministers and their actions through omission from the historical record, as was often done in conventional Chinese historiography. Sun's text as extant today consists strictly of his opinion about events; the reader consults the *Old Tang History* for the narration of the historical events to which he refers. Sun did not allow others to read the *Discussions and Judgments on Tang History* as he was writing it and it only began to circulate some time after his death in 1057.¹ Sima Guang 司馬光 (1019-1086) wrote a preface to the book in 1079 in which he admiringly describes Sun Fu's care in withholding his judgments from others' view, alludes to the politically sensitive nature of his work, and declares that finally obtaining a copy from Sun's nephew was worth more than gold.² Ouyang Xiu wrote a grave inscription for Sun Fu praising Sun for understanding Tang affairs as if he had been there to hear with his own ears and see with his own eyes, and declares “Therefore scholars say that reading history for a year doesn't compare to hearing one day of his discussions.” 故學者以謂閱歲讀史不如一日聞公論也³

The *Discussions and Judgments on Tang History* presents these discussions on various topics. Sun Fu's historical criticism is closely aligned with

¹ Michael Freeman, “Sun Fu,” in Franke (1976) p. 975

² Si ku quan shu p. 685-701b

³ Si ku quan shu p. 685-700a

the political views of Ouyang Xiu during the Qingli Reforms and the early Northern Song ancient style movement. Sun was demoted as a result of his association with this faction. Unlike Ouyang Xiu, Sun was never recalled to court. Thus his historical model presents an opposition argument addressed to politically like-minded individuals.

Three years after Sun Fu's death Ouyang Xiu completed the *New Tang History*. Throughout the remainder of the 11th century, the revision of Tang history and the relevance of history itself as a guide to imperial decision making were hotly contested at the Song court. Under Emperor Renzong and his successor Emperor Yingzong 英宗(reigned 1063-1067), scholars such as Ouyang Xiu, Sima Guang, Fan Zuyu and Su Che 蘇轍 (1039-1112) emphasized the importance of history as a guide to wise government. During his tenure as reader-in-waiting (*shidu* 侍讀) of history in the imperial seminar (*jing yan* 經筵), Sima received imperial sponsorship to compose his *Zizhi tongjian* 資治通鑒 (Comprehensive Mirror for Aid in Government), a comprehensive history of China from the Spring and Autumn period to the founding of the Song dynasty.⁴

Subsequently under Emperor Shenzong 神宗 (reigned 1067-1085) the reform faction of Wang Anshi 王安石(1021-1086) held sway at court and suppressed historical scholarship. The *Spring and Autumn Annals*, the canonical foundation of Chinese historiography, was excluded from classical learning.⁵ Michael Dennis Freeman, in his study of the conservative faction's

⁴ Robert Hartwell (1971) pp. 701-702

⁵ Michael Dennis Freeman (1973) pp. 133-142

opposition to the New Policies, succinctly described Wang Anshi's aversion to historical scholarship as follows: "Wang proposed no less than to devalue history as a guide for policy.... As his influence grew, the machinery of government itself came to reflect his indifference to historical precedent."⁶ Sima Guang argued that policy should be guided by lessons learned from analogous events in history. Wang argued instead that the classics provide timeless universal guides to ritual and the organization of state institutions regardless of historical context. He upheld the *Zhou li*, 周禮 (Rites of Zhou) in particular as the blueprint for the utopian society of the Zhou, which he used as the basis for examination learning and as justification for his New Policies.⁷

Sima Guang retired from the capital to Luoyang 洛陽 in protest of Wang's policies. Emperor Shenzong did maintain imperial sponsorship for the *Comprehensive Mirror*, to which Sima and his colleagues, among them Fan Zuyu, devoted themselves. Fan compiled the chapters on Tang history for Sima's work, simultaneously writing his own *Tang Mirror*.⁸ In his term as reader-in-waiting in the imperial seminar, he instructed the emperor and his advisers on the *Comprehensive Mirror*. His *Tang Mirror* appears to anticipate these lectures, selecting narrative of events nearly word for word from the *Comprehensive Mirror* and evaluating them in terms of the moral lessons to be learned from the classics. His book is therefore making a case not just for the specific moral lessons he draws from Tang history but for the worth of history

⁶ Michael Dennis Freeman (1973) p. 142

⁷ Peter Bol (1993) pp. 128-136

⁸ Michael Dennis Freeman (1973) pp. 153-157

itself as a moral guide to the emperor.

The *Tang Mirror* is the archetypal “historical model” from the Song. In historical model compositions, authors constructed arguments for their political vision of good governance by analogy to events and lessons from the historical record. The *Tang Mirror* in particular, and argument by historical analogism more generally, were both closely tied to the imperial seminar instituted for the education of the child Emperor Renzong in 1033 when he acceded to the throne at the age of 12. The imperial seminar continued under subsequent emperors as a forum for debate among the emperor and his chief ministers over the application of historical precedents and classical morals to current issues at the Song court. The imperial seminar consisted of influential scholars designated either reader-in-waiting or expositor-in-waiting (*shijiang* 侍講) who read and lectured on history and the classics for the edification of the emperor. Debates in the imperial seminar could directly influence the decisions of the ruler. Like Sima Guang, Fan Zuyu also served as a reader of history. In this capacity he read and instructed the emperor on events from the Tang, following each event with his didactic analysis of the political moral to be derived from the motivations and actions of the Tang rulers and their ministers.⁹ His book mimics this format in print.

These historical debates peaked in the mid-1080s. Sima Guang completed his *Comprehensive Mirror for Aid in Government* at the end of 1084. In 1085

⁹ See Robert Hartwell (1971) esp. pp. 696-705 for a detailed discussion of historical analogism, the imperial seminar, and its relationship to the histories written by Sima Guang and Fan Zuyu.

Emperor Shenzong passed away and Sima Guang was recalled to court. Sima went to work dismantling the New Policies, but then in 1086 both he and Wang Anshi also passed away. That same year Fan Zuyu published the *Tang Mirror*. It was read widely in both China and Japan.¹⁰

The *Old Tang History* contains many primary documents from the Tang court which are written in the parallel prose (*pian ti wen* 駢體文) of official Chinese writing during the Tang dynasty and earlier.¹¹ This type of writing followed set rules restricting the meter, grammar, and length of lines to form parallel couplets. As James Hightower has described in his detailed analysis of the parallel prose style, it is a highly artificial style that has its strengths but is not well suited to narrative.¹² Ouyang Xiu and his editorial board wrote the *New Tang History* in ancient style prose (*gu wen* 古文), summarizing or revising source texts which had been composed in parallel prose.¹³

The message of the ancient style movement was that the parallel prose which had flourished at the southern courts during the period of disunion (220-589) after the collapse of the Han 漢 (206 BC – AD 220) dynasty, and then ossified during the Tang, promoted linguistic artifice at the expense of moral substance. Ancient style authors associated it with social disorder, decadence and collapse, and advocated a return to the direct and concise expression of the Han period and earlier classics. They most revered the books of Confucius 孔子,

¹⁰ Etienne Balazs and Yves Hervouet (1978) p. 78

¹¹ For a detailed analysis of the process by which the *Old Tang History* was compiled, see Denis Twitchett *The Writing of Official History Under the Tang*, and in particular the first Appendix.

¹² James Hightower (1959)

¹³ See Zhao Yi *Nianer shi zha ji jiao zheng* pp. 232-3, Hao (2006), pp. 148-150

Mencius 孟子, and Yang Xiong 楊雄. For historical writing, the primary ancient models were the *Chunqiu* 春秋 (Spring and Autumn Annals), attributed to Confucius, and Zuo Qiuming's 左丘明 *Zuo zhuan* 左傳, construed as a commentary on the Spring and Autumn Annals,¹⁴ both completed during or before the 4th c. BC, as well as Sima Qian's 司馬遷 (d. 86 BCE) *Shi ji* 史記 (Records of the Historian).

Guwen writing originated among intellectuals in the late Tang period, most notably Han Yu 韓愈 (768-824). Han's *guwen* writings were less influential during his lifetime than they were during the Song dynasty when Ouyang Xiu upheld them as models for literary prose.¹⁵ Han Yu claimed to esteem only writings of the Han period and earlier, but emphasizes that it is the benevolent and righteous intentions of the early sages that he sought to emulate rather than their language itself.¹⁶

Han Yu and Ouyang Xiu both emphasize that language should express the intentions of the sages appropriately and naturally. They do not specify whether that means emulating the language of the classics or incorporating more of the natural language of Song times. Comparing the language of the *Old Tang History* and the extant primary sources from the Tang with the language of the Song revisions of these texts can give a clearer picture of what the ancient style ideology of writing appropriately and naturally means in linguistic terms.

¹⁴ Ronald Egan (1984), p. 77; also see Michael Dennis Freeman (1973) p. 157 regarding Sima Guang's and Fan Zuyu's affinity for the *Zuo zhuan*

¹⁵ Ronald Egan (1984) pp. 14-70; Charles Hartman (1986) p. 214

¹⁶ Charles Hartman (1986) pp. 254-55; 268

In 1105 the historical writings of both Fan Zuyu and Sima Guang were banned, stifling this kind of historical discourse.¹⁷ Thus the *Discussions and Judgments on Tang History* and the *Tang Mirror* were completed at the beginning and the culmination, respectively, of this period of intellectual debate about Tang history. They also coincide with the beginning and the fruition of the Northern Song ancient style prose movement. Sun Fu and Fan Zuyu have been overshadowed by their contemporaries Ouyang Xiu and Sima Guang, and later scholars of Tang history have disparaged their opinionated works as biased history. However these texts are rich resources for studying Northern Song ideas about history, about the didactic uses of the past in Northern Song politics, and about the linguistic and literary nature of historical narrative prose in the age of the *guwen* movement.

In my analysis I will examine the political and moral values in contention at the Song court implicit in the writing and rewriting of Tang history and explicit in the historical criticisms of Sun Fu and Fan Zuyu. I will also analyze how the language of the revisions of Tang history written during the ancient style prose movement compare to the prose of the original official history of the Tang and to the extant primary sources from the Tang period itself. My goal is to reveal changes among Song historians' conceptions of the nature of the literary and historical past and its relationship with their own literary and political careers.

¹⁷ Robert M. Hartwell (1971) pp. 713-717

1.2 Overview of Methods and Goals

In this dissertation I compare content from the *Old Tang History* and the *New Tang History*. I also investigate the two extant exemplars of Northern Song historical criticism written about the Tang, the *Tang shi lun duan* 唐史論斷 (Discussions and Judgments on Tang History) by Sun Fu 孫甫 (d. 1057) and the *Tang jian* 唐鑑 (Tang Mirror) by Fan Zuyu 范祖禹 (1040-1098). Rather than attempting a comprehensive description of the Tang as in standard dynastic histories, these texts select brief episodes from Tang history and then give the author's detailed critique of the event. These historical criticism texts focus on editorial opinion to an extent unprecedented in earlier Chinese historiography.

Although there was a florescence of historical scholarship on many periods of Chinese history during the Song era, the history of the Tang is especially interesting because, whereas the history of the Han dynasty and other periods had already been defined by great scholars of the past and generations of commentaries on their work, the history of the Tang was still up for grabs.

The methodological approach is to study different aspects of the texts in each chapter, according to the appropriate methodology for that aspect: historiography, ancient style, political critique, and book culture.

Historiography

In Chapter 2, I take a historiographical approach, looking at primary sources available from the Tang period itself. These sources cover the founding of the Tang dynasty in the early seventh century under Emperor Gaozu 高祖 (566-623, r. 618-626), and the life and brief reign of Emperor Shunzong 順宗

(761-806, r. 805) around the turn of the ninth century. Specifically, they are the “Diary for the founding of the Tang dynasty under Emperor Gaozu” by Wen Daya 溫大雅 and the “Veritable Records for the reign of Emperor Shunzong” by Han Yu 韓愈. I compare these extant primary sources with the accounts of events from these reigns in the *Old Tang History*, the *New Tang History*, and the *Tang Mirror*. I conclude that the *Old Tang History* follows the primary sources most closely and often repeats them word for word in its accounts. The *New Tang History* and the *Tang Mirror* tend to abbreviate the primary sources, but do so in different ways: the *New Tang History* tends to summarize the content of the primary sources, and the *Tang Mirror* tends to quote brief excerpts from them.

I also look at some memorials to the throne which are extant in sources such as the *Tang Hui Yao* 唐會要 and *Cefu Yuangui* 冊府元龜 and find that again the *Old Tang History* often contains the full text of the original memorials, and the *Tang Mirror* tends to quote the most salient points from the memorials in their original wording but not to quote the entire memorials as the *Old Tang History* does. In contrast the *New Tang History* tends to summarize the content of these memorials in its own words. This new language is the *guwen* 古文 “ancient style” prose made influential by Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007-1072).

Linguistics

In Chapter 3 I use a linguistic approach to analyze the syntax of the changes made by the editors of the *New Tang History*. Compiled under the guidance of Ouyang Xiu and Song Qi 宋祁 (998-1061), the *New Tang History* was a vehicle for the new writing style known as *guwen* or “ancient style prose.”

While the influence of the ancient style prose is well-known, debate persists regarding the relationship, linguistically, between the grammar of this ancient style prose and the grammar of the texts from the Han 漢(206 BCE – 220 CE) dynasty and earlier which were upheld as models of the ancient way, such as the *Zuo zhuan* 左傳 and the *Records of the Historian* 史記.

Ouyang Xiu's rejection of the stylized conventions of parallel prose freed Song authors from its contrived prosodic and syntactic rules in writing prose. He advocated rejecting the parallel prose style's syntactic and prosodic restrictions (restrictions which had not yet developed at the time when the classics had been written) and employing a more natural expository prose instead. Yet the language of the classical texts that ancient style writers revered such as the *Records of the Historian*, the *Spring and Autumn Annals* and *Zuo zhuan* had already become archaic by the ninth to eleventh centuries. Which natural language was the pattern for this new “ancient style” of writing—the language of authors of the Han and earlier, or that of their own time?

The question of the linguistic nature of *guwen* is further complicated when we consider *guwen* from the early Song period. 200 years elapsed between Han Yu's writing and Ouyang Xiu's promotion of his works, so what was natural and appropriate in 800 wasn't necessarily so in 1060.¹⁸ And while Ouyang Xiu claimed to be the inheritor of the ancient style movement from Han Yu, his prose

¹⁸In this respect, the basic annals of Shunzong 順宗 in the *Old Tang History* and in the *New Tang History* are particularly important. The *shi lu* 實錄 “veritable records” of emperor Shunzong upon which the basic annals for his brief reign were based, were composed by Han Yu and preserved in his collected works. They survive due to their author's subsequent fame, and are the only extant example of these kinds of primary records. Thus they invite comparison of how different histories written during the Song edit the source material, and how Ouyang Xiu edits the records written by the forefather of *guwen* prose. See Bernard Solomon (1955) for a detailed study of the *Shunzong shi lu* by Han Yu.

style differs significantly from Han's and the prose of his historical narratives differs from his ancient style writing in other genres.¹⁹ Ouyang admired Han, but in 1040 he urged Wang Anshi not to emulate Han Yu's style but to write naturally.²⁰

I compare the language of the *Old Tang History* to the language of the *New Tang History* to identify particular syntactic parameters at work in the Song editors' changes to the Tang era sources. I argue that the syntax of the eleventh-century ancient style prose follows the syntax that was current at the time it was written. It does not imitate the grammar of the classics. Instead, it represents the concepts and ethics of the classics in a written form that resembles eleventh-century oratory.

I also argue that the syntax of Han Yu 韓愈 (768-824), the famous Tang-era promoter of the ancient style, is more similar to the language of other Tang writers than it is to the ancient style prose of the Song period. I conclude this linguistic analysis by arguing that ancient style prose was meant to evoke the Confucian values of outspoken criticism associated with certain historians and philosophers of the Han and earlier. It was not meant to revive archaic grammar. Instead, it used more contemporary grammar to revive the direct argumentative approach to prose writing.

Ideology

In Chapter 4, the focus shifts from the narration of historical events to the historians' critiques of those events, particularly in the *Discussions and*

¹⁹ Ronald Egan (1984) pp. 75-77

²⁰ Ronald Egan (1984), p. 20

Judgments of Tang History and the Tang Mirror.

This chapter focuses on the issues from the past which provoked the most vocal debates among Song literati. I relied upon two kinds of evidence to identify the most contentious issues among Song historians, evidence internal to the *Discussions and Judgments on Tang History* and the *Tang Mirror*, and evidence from other texts of the period which relates to Tang historical events and their political implications.

Internal evidence consists of explicit references by Sun Fu and Fan Zuyu to historiographical issues or to disagreements with the official historical accounts. This evidence points to the complicated issues of succession that plagued the Tang from the death of Gaozong through the end of Minghuang's reign as one of the most contentious issues debated by these historians. The proper way to record the disruption of the Tang dynastic succession by Empress Wu's Zhou 周 dynasty (690-705) is by far the most prominent historiographical problem debated by the authors, and the careers of officials such as Yao Chong 姚崇(650-721) and Song Jing 宋璟(663-737) who weathered the storms of her monopolization of power and steered the course for the Tang renaissance of the early part of Minghuang's reign provide an archetype for the scholar-official ideal of the Song period.

Evidence from other texts of the period include references to the *Discussions and Judgments on Tang History* and the *Tang Mirror* from prefaces, grave inscriptions, personal correspondence or collected works by other

Song authors. This evidence suggests a dominant interest in the ministers Wei Zheng 魏徵 (580-643) and Chu Suiliang 褚遂良 (597-658), who served under Tang Taizong 唐太宗 (r. 626-649), and the ministers Yao Chong and Song Jing, who began their careers under Empress Wu but helped to bring about her demise and the restoration of the Tang throne to Minghuang. Closely related to these topics are the issues of succession mentioned above.

I also considered the contents of the anonymous and undated collection of historical arguments known as the *Lidai mingxian quelun* 歷代名賢確論. Although this collection is of unknown provenance, internal evidence suggests that it was compiled during the Song dynasty. Comparisons of passages contained in this anthology to available extant texts from which the anthology quotes, shows that the anthology represents a faithful reproduction of critiques of historical events current at that time. This anthology consists of historical criticisms written by great statesmen categorized chronologically according to the historical events which they critique.

Some events from the Tang period have only one critique in the anthology, most often drawn from Fan Zuyu's *Tang Mirror*, by far the most significant contributor to the collection. The topic which elicits the most number of critiques, with a total of 7, is again the minister Wei Zheng. Second to this in importance are the Ministers Yao Chong and Song Jing, overviews of the reign of Tang Minghuang, and overviews of the rise and fall of the Tang itself.

Synthesizing the references from both internal and external evidence suggests that the most hotly contested issues involve the means by which

outspoken and upright ministers effect good policy for the empire by restraining the imperial prerogative of the men and women of the royal family through persuasive criticism. I argue that the revision of Tang history was not only a literary movement, it was also a political one. These debates on Tang history served as a medium for the growing educated class to voice political opinions and assert the interests of the civil bureaucracy.

Printing and Book History

In Chapter 5 I look at the prominent place of books on Tang history in the market for printed books which emerged in the eleventh century in China. The increasing popularity of historical criticism during the Northern Song is arguably related to the flourishing of woodblock printing in Song society. Recent research on print culture in China reveals interesting ways in which woodblock printing influenced the production of writing generally and of historical prose specifically.

During the three and a half centuries from the founding of the Tang to the founding of the Song, increasing wealth, literacy and the technology of woodblock printing enabled drastic changes in the exchange of texts and ideas. Texts in the Tang dynasty were copied by hand on scrolls. These manuscripts coexisted with performance practices of singing poems, reciting the classics and reading aloud which aided in the memorization and oral transmission of texts in conjunction with written transcription. These manuscript and oral traditions continued alongside the development of printing in the Northern Song, but print introduced new possibilities for the written word. Woodblock printing impacted the economics of textual production and exchange, but more importantly it altered

the attitudes and assumptions of readers and writers about the written word.

The economic effects of printing on the reading public during the Song are unclear and continue to be debated. Although the limited data available on the size of print runs and the changes in book prices remain inconclusive, it is clear that history books were among the most frequently printed of all books.²¹

Furthermore it is clear that in the case of Ouyang Xiu's *New Tang History* and Fan Zuyu's *Tang Mirror*, the authors were aware that their books would be printed during their lifetime. Imperial printing of the dynastic histories was commissioned in 994 and completed in 1061, one year after the completion of the *New Tang History*, so from the beginning of the compilation Ouyang Xiu and his colleagues knew their work would be printed.²²

Comparing these books to the earlier histories and primary documents can reveal ways in which awareness of the power of this new technology affected authorial attitudes. In the final chapter, I consider ways in which this newly popular genre of historical criticism was necessarily a product of print culture. Furthermore, the success of the ancient style prose movement may also be attributed to print culture. Stuart Sargent argues that the reading practices associated with printed works enabled the development of new styles of writing. Parallel prose, with its regulated line length and rhythm, was well suited to memorization and recitation. Ancient style prose, which was more difficult to memorize and recite due to its rejection of standardized metrical regulations,

²¹ Ming-sun Poon (1979), p. 170, Thomas Francis Carter (1955), pp. 85-86, Lucille Chia (2002), p. 118

²² Tsuen-hsui Tsien (1985), p. 163

flourished under conditions where duplication of the printed word allowed broader access to identical copies of written texts. Furthermore, Sargent argues, the original ideas of contemporary authors gain new value in this context.²³ I conclude that the new medium of print contributed to the historiographical, literary, and political dimensions of Northern Song reflections on the Tang.

1.3 Preliminary Conclusions

In the second half of the eleventh century, literature about the Tang dynasty served as a vehicle for Song authors to define their ideas about the changing political, material and literary culture of their own society. Not only did they debate the didactic content of Tang history, they developed new genres in which to express these ideas which gave greater prominence to contemporary authors' voices at the expense of received tradition. Within these genres, they employed different linguistic strategies to legitimate their authorial voices.

Sun Fu's *Discussions and Judgments on Tang History* was written at the beginning of both this new skepticism towards the past and at the beginning of the ancient prose movement promoted by Ouyang Xiu. Fan Zuyu's *Tang Mirror* was written as the factional disputes over history and its uses were at their height, and when the ancient prose movement had become influential in the literary culture of the civil service. By examining these two texts in depth within the context of official historiography of the time, I will elucidate the issues and tactics in play during this dynamic period in which Song literati were redefining their past and their present.

²³ Stuart Sargent (1994) pp. 247-251

Chapter 2: Historical Narrative and the Institutions and Sources for the Writing of Dynastic Histories in Medieval China

Already in the Tang dynasty, an extensive bureaucratic apparatus existed for the purpose of keeping records and compiling histories. The delegation of responsibilities varied over the course of the dynasty, as did the types of historical documents drafted to record events for posterity.²⁴ However, certain types of records were kept for each reign of the Tang. Of primary importance are the 起居注(*qi ju zhu*, Diaries of Activity and Repose), the 實錄(*shi lu*, Veritable Records), and the 國史(*guo shi*, National History).

The institutions involved in producing the historical records for the Tang dynasty, and the political motivations for the commissioning of particular documents at certain points during the Tang dynasty, are the subject of a detailed study by Denis Twitchett, *The Writing of Official History Under the T'ang*. He shows that most of the primary sources from the early Tang were repeatedly edited over the course of the first half of the dynasty, and that often the motivation for editing the sources was to legitimate the reign of the current occupant of the throne. For the purposes of this dissertation, three phases of Tang historiography are relevant: the composition of the Diary and Veritable Records for the reigns of Emperors Gaozu and Taizong, the editing of the *National History* during the reigns of Wu Zetian and Minghuang, and the composition of the “Veritable Record for the Reign of Emperor Shunzong” by

²⁴ See Dennis Twitchett, *The Writing of Official History Under the T'ang*, for a thorough study of the sources and process of official historiography during the Tang dynasty.

Han Yu.

The Diaries of Activity and Repose were kept during the reign of each emperor to record his words and actions. This practice was based on precedents from the Warring States period, when, according to the *Li ji* (禮記 Classic of Rituals) and the *Zuo zhuan* (左傳 Zuo Commentary on the Spring and Autumn Annals), rulers had a recorder of the left to record their actions and a recorder of the right to record their words.²⁵ Since at least the Han period, the observation that the *Spring and Autumn Annals* primarily records important actions and events, and the *Book of Documents* primarily records great speeches of early rulers, was taken as further evidence of this bifurcation of record keeping.²⁶ The official titles of the recorders changed at different points throughout the Tang dynasty,²⁷ but the practice of maintaining a Diary of Activity and Repose remained constant.

This didactic role of history began with the recording of the Diaries of Activity and Repose. The recorders themselves would contribute to policy debates at court and provide warnings to the emperor and his councilors based on historical precedents.²⁸ Being continually reminded that his words and actions were being judged and recorded for posterity could restrain the Emperor's conduct, in a system with little to no checks or balances on the Emperor's authority. This is clearly illustrated in the memorial to Tang Gaozu (examined in detail below) which states: “Your honor is esteemed as the Son of

²⁵ See Twitchett, *The Writing of Official History*, pp. 5-11; Jin Yufu, *Zhongguo shixue shi*, pp. 3-19.

²⁶ Twitchett, *The Writing of Official History*, p. 6, n. 7,8

²⁷ See Twitchett, *The Writing of Official History*, pp. 6-9, especially n. 11-13.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 9-11

Heaven, and is blessed to possess the empire. Move and the recorder of the left writes it, speak and the recorder of the right writes it. Since you are restrained by the bamboo and silk, how could you abandon yourself to wantonness (恣情) without caution?”²⁹ Thus court historians fulfilled a role akin to the “fourth estate,” with the important distinction that they were themselves fully engaged in the debates which took place at court, rather than silently observing them from the gallery.

The next stage in the compilation of imperial history was the composition of the Veritable Records, based on the Diaries of Activity and Repose and other documents available to court historians³⁰. Veritable Records were composed for the reign of each Emperor, and their composition, especially during the Tang, was an even more overtly political act than the composition of the diaries themselves. It was usually motivated by a perceived need to use the Veritable Records of a prior reign to legitimize the current ruler; in many cases during the early Tang, reigning Emperors (including Taizong 太宗, Gaozong 高宗 and Wu Zetian 武则天) commissioned Veritable Records for the first part of their own reigns while they were still on the throne.³¹ Veritable Records, like the Diaries of Activity and Repose, were written in chronicle format.

²⁹ SKQS Jiu Tang Shu 75:10-11

³⁰ Other documents besides the Diaries of Activity and Repose were presumably used in the composition of Veritable Records at different points throughout the Tang dynasty, for example, the *shi zheng ji* “records of administrative affairs”, which were commissioned sporadically during the Tang dynasty, as well as other reports submitted to the Historiographical Office. However, none of these documents survive. Records of Administrative Affairs were only produced beginning under Wu Zetian in the 690s, and none were composed after the late 8th century at the latest, which means that none were written during the reigns of Gaozu, Taizong, or Shunzong, the periods which are of primary importance here. For more information on the *shi zheng ji*, see Denis Twitchett *The Writing of Official History Under the Tang* pp. 27-30; 51-56

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 120

2.1 The textual history of the first National History of the Tang

For the purposes of this chapter, the relevant Veritable Records are those for the reigns of Gaozu, Taizong and Shunzong. Emperor Taizong commissioned the Veritable Record for Gaozu's reign and for the beginning of his own reign in 640. He objected to not being allowed to read the records of the court diarists, and so commissioned Fang Xuanling 房玄齡 to present him with a historical record to instruct him on the mistakes and accomplishments of his father and himself. Presumably, his ulterior motive was to authorize the historical depiction of his own role in the founding of the Tang dynasty and his usurpation of the throne from his father after killing his two brothers. Both the “Veritable Record for the Reign of Emperor Gaozu” and the “Veritable Record for the Reign of the Current Emperor” (e.g., Taizong) were presented to Taizong in 643. These two texts form the oldest layer in the historical narrative incorporated into the *Old Tang History*.

The next step in the evolution of Tang imperial history was the composition of the *Guo shi* 國史 (*National History*), in the composite annal-biography format, based on the chronicles of previous Veritable Records. National Histories were not composed at regular intervals. Like the Veritable Records, they were usually commissioned as a means of legitimizing a new regime; it was “a significant political act and was not undertaken out of purely academic motives. Each of the National Histories of the [Tang] was commissioned for a clear political purpose.”³²

³² Ibid. p. 160

The political events surrounding the commissioning of the Tang National Histories are traced in detail by Pulleyblank. The first National History, was compiled privately by Yao Silian in 627 after Taizong usurped the throne from his father, Gaozu. It covered the founding of the dynasty and the reign of the first Tang Emperor, as well as the beginning of the reign of Taizong. It served as the basis for the first officially commissioned National History compiled by the chief minister Zhangsun Wuji, the rector of the imperial university Linghu Defen, and others. As chief minister and director of the National History, Zhangsun Wuji presented it to Emperor Gaozong in 656, although Linghu Defen was the historian primarily in charge of its compilation. This history also covered the founding of the Tang and the reign of Gaozu, and added the events of the remainder of Taizong's reign. According to Liu Zhiji, "Though one might criticize it as wordy and uneven, it occasionally had merits."³³

During the 660s, the National History was substantially revised by Xu Jingzong (592-672), who added the basic annals of Gaozong, and contributed to the biographies and monographs. He may very well have tampered with the earlier sections of the history as well, for he was considered an unscrupulous historian. According to Liu Zhiji, "In this work of annal-biography form Jingzong sometimes deceitfully catered to the ruling powers of the time, sometimes unscrupulously paid off private grudges, and in all matters of praise and blame failed to give a true account."³⁴ This work was continued by Li Renshi, who was

³³ Pulleyblank, "The *Tzjyjr Tongjiann Kaoyih* and the Sources for the Period 730-763" pp. 450-451, translating from *Shi tong tong shi* 12.30 ff.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

much more reliable than Xu Jingzong. “Whether recording words or events, he always exhibited a forthright brush.”³⁵ However, he died before he could complete his revisions to Xu's work.

When Wu Zetian took the throne as Emperor of her Zhou dynasty in 690, declaring (prematurely, as it would turn out) the end of the Tang dynasty, the first official dynastic history of the Tang (唐書 *Tang shu*) was compiled by her Vice President of the Board of Rites (春官侍郎 *chunguan shilang*). Not to be confused with the extant *Old Tang History* or *New Tang History*, this work covered the reigns of Gaozu, Taizong and Gaozong, (618-683) and the very act of its compilation must have been intended as a legitimization of the end of the Tang dynasty and the beginning of the Zhou dynasty. According to Liu Zhiji, the author was

...deaf and dumb, stupid and incapable, yet he rashly ventured to compose the great record of a whole dynasty. His whole record was based on the accounts of conduct of private families. But the accounts of the men of the time were seldom distinguished in character. Sometimes they used language as lofty and elegant as poetry, sometimes they used a style as simple and bare as a document. Yet he put everything down in order without emendation. In what he wrote himself, he tended to the humorous, the vulgar, the marvelous and the extravagant. In recording events he was confused and disordered. How could one therefore find anything admirable in reading his chapters? When one unravels his sentences one does not understand what they are about. Soon after, all of the histories of Yao, Xu, and others were gathered in so that only his would circulate. Because of this, the records of the early acts of the Tang royal house were almost lost.³⁶

As Wu Zetian's reign neared its end and the restoration of the Tang heir apparent was immanent, she ordered Liu Zhiji 劉知幾, Wu Jing 吳兢 and others

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Pulleyblank p 452, translating from *Shi tong tong shi* 12

to edit the previously commissioned dynastic history into a national history once again. Although this project was never completed, Wu Jing continued to work on it as a private draft throughout the early 8th century. Never satisfied with his work, Wu Jing would continue to edit and polish his private history up until his death in 749. In the meantime however, in 730, Wei Shu was appointed to compile a National History based on the incomplete draft composed by Wu Jing, the *History of the Tang* composed at the beginning of Wu Zetian's reign, and the earlier history composed by Zhansun Wuji 張孫無忌 (d. 659) and Linghu Defen in 656. Just as in the case of Wu Jing's project, this project was officially abandoned before it was completed, but Wei Shu continued to work on it as a private draft. It was Wei Shu's private composition of the history of the Tang that formed the basis for the final official National History of the Tang.³⁷

When An Lushan 安祿山 occupied the Tang capital from 756 to 757, the Historiographical Office was burnt to the ground, so that none of the official records of the period up to and including Xuanzong's 玄宗 reign (712-756) survived. However, when Xuanzong fled the capital to Chengdu as the rebels approached Chang'an, Wei Shu had hidden away his own copy of the National History which he had privately compiled. As a result it was this private history that served as the basis for the National History submitted to the throne in the 760s by Wei Shu's colleagues after the restoration of the Tang under Suzong 肅宗 (r. 756-762) at the end of the An Lushan rebellion. This National History, updated by Yu Xiulie 于休烈 to cover the entirety of Suzong's reign after his death

³⁷ Denis Twitchett, *The Writing of Official History Under the Tang*, 165-187

in 762, was the last National History to be composed during the Tang dynasty, and the only one to survive into the Song period. Apparently the *Old Tang History* incorporated it in its entirety for the period from the founding of the dynasty in 618 to the Tang restoration after the An Lushan rebellion with the reign of Suzong.³⁸

Given the textual history of this National History, the *Old Tang History* narrative from the founding of the Tang until 762 can be considered of a piece. Having been extensively edited and re-edited over the course of a century, not all of the material was contributed by a single individual. However, the final edition can be considered, for the most part, to be the work of Wei Shu. Furthermore, since the other versions of the history are presumed lost in the burning of Chang'an, the *Old Tang History* narrative of this period was likely the primary source relied on most heavily by the compilers of the *New Tang History*.

For the period after the An Lushan rebellion, no National History was ever again commissioned. The only official historical record to survive from this period is the Veritable Record of the Emperor Shunzong. However, there were more official documents preserved from this period than from the period before the rebellion, and new compilations in the form of encyclopedias, such as the ninth century *Hui yao* 會要 provide materials for later historians. For this period, there was no unified record of events compiled to be easily incorporated into the *Old Tang History*. For editors of the *New Tang History*, there were also a greater variety of sources to rely on in editing the history. Therefore, for the

³⁸ Ibid.

period after the rebellion, there is likely to be more divergence between the *New Tang History* and the *Old Tang History*.

2.2 Secondary research on Song historiography

Scholarship on the genre of history during the Northern Song illustrates how historical narratives reflected concerns of the political present in their depiction of events of the past. Naomi Standen and Richard Davis have each compared the *Jiu wu dai shi* 舊五代史 (Old History of the Five Dynasties, completed in 974) and the *Xin wu dai shi* 新五代史 (New History of the Five Dynasties, completed in 1073)³⁹ and illustrated how Ouyang Xiu projected changing social and political values onto the past in his revised *New History of the Five Dynasties*. Standen has analyzed changing concepts of loyalty and border crossing in the revised history,⁴⁰ and Davis has described changing gender ideals in the same text.⁴¹ Johannes Kurz compared the history of the Southern Tang in the *New History of the Five Dynasties* to both the *Old History of the Five Dynasties* and the *Comprehensive Mirror for Aid in Government*, as well as a half dozen other historical narratives about the Southern Tang written during the period from 974 to 1105. He finds that “the historical record changes with the growing importance of the faction issue”⁴² at the Song court over the course of the 11th century. Items recorded as discrete events by separate individuals in the early accounts of the Southern Tang are rearranged and combined in later

³⁹ *New History of the Five Dynasties* was also edited by Ouyang Xiu, although as a private project rather than an imperially commissioned revision

⁴⁰ Naomi Standen (2007)

⁴¹ Richard L. Davis (2001), (2004)

⁴² Johannes Kurz (1998) p. 3

histories to create the semblance of a coordinated faction at work.⁴³ Studies by Hoyt Cleveland Tillman and Xiao-bin Ji reveal traces of Sima Guang's conservative politics implicitly communicated through subtle editorial selections in his *Comprehensive Mirror for Aid in Government*. In his recent work on Song historiography, Thomas H. C. Lee identifies a preoccupation among Song scholars with demonstrating superiority of their culture to that of the Tang era, as well as an increased sense of detachment and distance from past events in Song historical consciousness.⁴⁴

Most of this research has focused on Ouyang Xiu's *New History of the Five Dynasties* and Sima Guang's *Comprehensive Mirror for Aid in Government*. My study of the *Discussions and Judgments on Tang History* and the *Tang Mirror* brings the voices of Sun Fu and Fan Zuyu to the debate to broaden understanding of Northern Song values and historical thought. In their prolific evaluations of historical events, both of these texts express explicitly the kinds of moral judgments which are often implicit in their contemporaries' texts on Tang history. Do they share Ouyang Xiu's ideals of loyalty, political legitimacy, and female virtue identified by Standen, Kurz and Davis in his other historical work? Do they avow Sima Guang's conservative principles uncovered by Tillman and by Ji in the *Comprehensive Mirror for Aid in Government*? In addition to these issues my research will also focus on the relationship between the ruler and his ministers in the Tang histories. A primary concern of both Sun and Fan was the

⁴³ Johannes Kurz (1998) pp. 5, 31-33

⁴⁴ Thomas H. C. Lee (2004)

selection and employment of ministers by the emperor, which was of particular importance in the minds of the opposition faction at the Song court.

2.3 Extant Primary Sources Used in this Study

Currently, no edition of the *National History* survives. There are, however, one Diary of Activity and Repose and one Veritable Record from the Tang dynasty extant today. The Diary of Activity and Repose covers the founding of the Tang dynasty by Emperor Gaozu, written by Wen Daya 溫大雅 in the 620s. In addition, although the Veritable Record for the reign of Gaozu is not extant, there is an excerpt from it which has survived in other sources, which I will also examine below. The only Veritable Record to survive in its entirety covers the very brief reign of the Emperor Shunzong 順宗 (r. 805), who ruled for less than a year due to his loss of speech after a stroke; however, this Veritable Record also records many events from the long reign of his predecessor, Dezong 德宗 (r. 779-805), which relate to Shunzong's actions while still crown prince. It has been preserved in the collected works of the great Tang literatus Han Yu 韓愈 (768-824), who composed the original draft of the Veritable Record for the Reign of the Emperor Shunzong (although, as explained below, it is unclear how extensively the extant version of this controversial text has been edited by the official Lu Sui 路隨 776-835). A close comparison of events from the eras covered by these two primary sources, and also in the *Old Tang History*, *New Tang History*, and the *Tang Mirror* will shed light on changing historiographical practices in dealing with primary sources which were taking place in 11th century

China.

The Diary of Activity and Repose for the Founding of the Great Tang

Diaries of activity and repose (起居注) were chronicles of the official conduct of the ruler. As discussed above, they were the first of the main types of primary sources to be written for eventual incorporation into the dynastic histories. They were written during the reign of each ruler, but only the diary for the beginning of the reign of Gaozu is extant. It covers the events leading up to and including the founding of the Tang dynasty in the early 7th century. As such, it likely was not a typical exemplar of this genre, since it deals with the military campaigns and intrigues of the overthrow of the Sui, rather than the daily bureaucratic business of an established court. The exciting subject matter of the founding of the Tang may well have led to its popularity and preservation. The passages cited below comprise the most extensive overlap in narrative material in the *Diary*, the *Old Tang History*, the *New Tang History*, and the *Tang Mirror*. The event covered is the alliance between Tang Gaozu and the rebel Li Mi.

The Alliance between Gaozu and Li Mi

The *Diary* provides a detailed account of the verbal and textual maneuverings by Tang Gaozu and Li Mi 李密 (582-619), his rival to the empire at the collapse of the Sui dynasty. Li Mi sends Gaozu a letter requesting an alliance, Gaozu speaks to his supporters revealing his intention of betraying this alliance to gain the empire for himself alone, then Gaozu dispatches a letter to Li Mi assenting to the alliance. These three verbal acts, that is, the two written letters and the one oral speech, are treated with different strategies by the four historical

texts.

In all four sources, the letter from Li Mi to Gaozu is not quoted extensively.

The *Diary*, records this letter as follows:

He wrote a letter to lay claim to the Empire with the Emperor [e.g. Li Yuan, Tang Gaozu], full of a great many words most of which are not recorded here, but with the main point being: 'wishing for a Meng Jin alliance with the Emperor, to defeat the last Shang emperor at Mu Ye, to seize the last Qin emperor at Xianyang,' with killing the [Sui] regent and claiming the throne as his meaning.

作書與帝以天下爲己任屢有大言其書多不錄大略云欲帝為盟津之會殪商辛於牧野執子嬰於咸陽其旨殺後王執代王為意⁴⁵

In this passage, Wen Daya, the author of the *Diary*, first states the purpose of the letter, then gives a synopsis of the historical allusions to decisive moments in the defeat of corrupted dynasties contained in Li Mi's letter, then explains that the meaning of the letter was to overthrow the Sui dynasty.

The *Old Tang History* follows a similar strategy. It provides a new description of the purpose of the letter but leaves the remainder of the passage unchanged:

“He wrote a letter to Gaozu calling him older brother, and requesting his allegiance in defeating the Sui.”

乃致書呼高祖為兄請合從以滅隋⁴⁶

It then quotes the synopsis of the historical allusions and the explanation of the letter verbatim from the *Diary*.

The *New Tang History* only describes the purpose of the letter without

⁴⁵ SKQS Tang chuang ye qi ju zhu 2:9

⁴⁶ SKQS Jiu Tang shu 53:18

any additional reference to its content:

“He sent a letter addressing the Emperor as older brother, and requesting he make haste to meet him within the bend in the river.”

致書于帝呼為兄請以步騎會河內。⁴⁷

The *Tang Mirror* employs an alternative tactic, only quoting the historical allusions to dynastic founding myths. It does not provide the additional explanation of the meaning from the *Diary*, or any description of the purpose of the letter found in the other three sources. “He corresponded in a letter saying: 'In that to which you aspire, we can give each other a helping hand, and unite our strength with one mind. Seize the last Qin emperor in Xianyang . Kill the last Shang emperor at Muye'.”

復書曰所望左提右挈戮力同心執子嬰於咸陽殪商辛於牧野⁴⁸

To summarize the varying accounts of this first episode, the *Old Tang History* provides the most faithful replication of the account in the *Diary*. Both the *New Tang History* and the *Tang Mirror* provide more succinct accounts, but do so using different strategies: the *New Tang History* dispenses with the historical allusions from the letter and gives a direct explanation of its purpose; the *Tang Mirror* excerpts the historical allusions from the letter without providing an explicit explanation of its purpose.

In the next passage, Tang Gaozu tells his followers what he thinks of this letter. This passage functions in the historical narrative to reveal to the reader the intentions behind his letter of reply, which follows later. As with the previous

⁴⁷ SKQS Xin Tang shu 84:7

⁴⁸ SKQS Tang jian 1:3

passage, the *Old Tang History* quotes the source text of the *Diary* almost word-for-word. The *Old Tang History* also includes a more detailed evaluation by Gaozu of Li Mi's character, of their relative strategic positions, and of the hypothetical negative consequences of refusing the alliance at the beginning of his speech. This serves to provide some mitigating circumstances (politically if not morally) for entering an alliance in bad faith, which are not present in the original record.

The account in the original diary is as follows:

The emperor received the letter and, taking it in his hands, said to those close to him: 'Mi has overstepped his bounds and has not attained the Mandate of Heaven, he is suited for warding off the troops of the eastern capital for me, to maintain defense of the Chenggao pass. Even more than Han or Peng, none is as useful as Mi. Better to use flattering words to praise him in order to make his intentions more arrogant, causing him not to fear me. [I'll] obtain entrance to the pass, occupy and then station troops at Yongfeng, obstruct Yaohan and then approach the Yin River and the Luo River, observing to the east the bands of rebels' tendency to fight like the snipe and the clam, after which I will be the fabled fisherman of Qin [e.g. who captures them both].

帝覽書抵掌謂所親曰密誇誕不達天命適所以為吾拒東都之兵守成臯之扼更覓韓彭莫如用密宜卑辭推獎以驕其志使其不虞於我得入關據蒲津而屯永豐阻崤函而臨伊洛東看羣賊鸛蚌之勢吾然後為秦人之漁父矣⁴⁹

In the *Old Tang History* the account is as follows:

Gaozu received the letter and laughed, saying: 'Li Mi is reckless and arrogant, he is not one who can be won over by a humble letter. I have just secured leadership of the capital and cannot yet push to conquer the east, if I were to spurn this alliance that would create another Qin. Now Mi is suitable for warding off the troops of the eastern capital for me and holding the Chenggao pass. Even better than seeking out Han or Peng, none is as useful as Mi. Better to praise him with flattering words in order to make his intentions

⁴⁹ SKQS Tang chuang ye qi ju zhu 2:10

more arrogant, causing him not to fear me. Obtaining entrance to the pass, occupying Pujin and then stationing troops at Yongfeng, obstructing Yaohan and then approaching the Yin River and the Luo River, my great triumph will be accomplished.

高祖覽書笑曰李密陸梁放肆不可以折簡致之吾方安輯京師未遑東討即相阻絕便是更生一秦密今適所以為吾拒東都之兵守成臯之扼更求韓彭莫如用密宜卑辭推獎以驕其志使其不虞於我我得入關據蒲津而屯永豐阻崤函而臨伊洛吾大事濟矣”⁵⁰

As in the first passage above, the *Old Tang History* again provides the account which follows the source material most closely, with certain additions to contextualize the event. Also as in the first instance, the *Tang Mirror* and the *New Tang History* both change the words of Gaozu's speech to a certain extent. Although some phrases are repeated in their entirety, neither the portion of the speech added in the *Old Tang History* nor the portion duplicated from the *Diary* in the *Old Tang History* are directly copied into either the *New Tang History* or into the *Tang Mirror*. In both cases the content of the speech is re-presented in different words. In each book, however, these edited versions are presented as the direct speech of Gaozu to his troops, not as edited or reported speech.

The *Tang Mirror* narrates the events as follows: “Gaozu received the letter and said, 'Mi is reckless and arrogant, no simple letter can win him over. If I abruptly reject him then this will give rise to another enemy. It is better to flatter and praise him in order to make his intentions more arrogant.'” 高祖得書曰密妄自矜大非折簡可致若遽絕之乃是更生一敵不如卑辭推獎以驕其志⁵¹

Despite the fact that they do not use direct quotations, it is clear here that

⁵⁰ SKQS Jiu Tang shu 53:19

⁵¹ SKQS Tang jian 1.3

the *Tang Mirror* narrative is more closely affiliated with the *Old Tang History* and not the *Diary*, since it makes use of both the material included in the *Old Tang History* which was not included in the *Diary*, and the material that was included in both sources. However, it selectively uses this material in a way that emphasizes Tang Gaozu's duplicity. By omitting the additional material about Gaozu's strategically inferior position militarily, the *Tang Mirror* depicts him as by nature prone to flattery and manipulation as the easiest means to obtain his desired ends, rather than resorting to such tactics out of military necessity.

The *New Tang History* gives the following account:

Mi is arrogant, and cannot be won over with a simple letter. I have just fixed my leadership of the capital and cannot yet strike the east, if I do not cooperate this will give rise to another Sui. Mi is suited to hold Chenggao and ward off the troops of the eastern capital so that they cannot obtain the west; better than sending for plundering generals, none is as good as Mi. I would rather go along with him in order to make his intentions more arrogant, when I obtain a position within the pass my great triumph will be accomplished.

密陸梁不可折簡致之吾方定京師未能東略若不與是生一隋密適為吾守成臯拒東都兵
使不得西更遣剽將莫如密吾寧推順使驕其志我得留撫關中大事濟矣⁵²

As with the *Tang Mirror*, the *New Tang History* gives an account which draws more on the content of the *Old Tang History* than it does on the original *Diary*. However, just as in the earlier part of the narrative described above, it rewrites the content in different words instead of quoting directly. Furthermore, it rewrites the content in ways which serve to draw causal connections between items which may or may not have been intended as discrete items in the earlier versions. For example, where the *Old Tang History* writes that Li Mi is “suited

⁵² SKQS Xin Tang shu 84:7

for warding off the troops of the eastern capital for me, to maintain defense of the Chenggao pass,” the *New Tang History* reorganizes and supplements these same phrases so that they read, “Mi is suited to hold Chenggao and ward off the troops of the eastern capital so that they cannot obtain the west.”

Finally comes the letter of reply from Gaozu to Li Mi. In this passage we have arguably the most reliable primary source available from the early Tang period, in that the letter written from Tang Gaozu to Li Mi was transcribed by Wen Daya, who was himself the author of the *Diary of Activity and Repose from the Founding of the Tang Dynasty*. The *Diary* includes the letter sent in reply in its entirety. In the *Old Tang History*, the middle third of the letter is omitted (see Appendix; due to the length of the letter I will not translate it here). However the remaining two thirds of the letter correspond virtually word-for word to the letter as written in the diary. In the *Tang Mirror* and the *New Tang History*, the content of this letter is abbreviated significantly, though according to the same two strategies seen in the first passage above.

The *Tang Mirror* excerpts the most salient information from the letter and quotes it directly:

He returned a letter saying: 'Heaven generates the people, and they must have leaders to shepherd them. Now today, if you are not fit to be that shepherd, then who is? This old man's years have passed fifty, my ambitions don't extend to that. I gladly support you, my great younger brother. I rely and depend on you. If only, brother, you soon follow your heavenly destiny in order to bring peace to the million commoners, and be the head of our clan alliance, accepting my subordinate households to be enfeoffed again in Tang, this honor would be sufficient.'

復書曰天生蒸民必有司牧當今為牧非子而誰老夫年踰知命願不及此欣戴大弟攀鱗附

翼惟弟早膺圖籙以寧兆庶宗盟之長屬籍見容復封於唐斯榮足矣⁵³

The *New Tang History* summarizes the content and function of the letter: “He ordered his secretary Wen Daya to write a letter in reply, with great decorum honoring him and submitting.” 令記室温大雅作報書厚禮尊讓⁵⁴

In this episode, the *Old Tang History* corresponds most closely to the source text. The differences between it and the *New Tang History* and the *Tang Mirror* may have been introduced at intervening stages between the composition of the Diary and its editing into the Gaozu Veritable Records and the National History, rather than by the authors of the *New Tang History* or the *Tang Mirror*. One of the motivations of the many revisions to the Veritable Records and the National History in the mid-seventh century was to depict Taizong, and not Gaozu, as the real founding father of the dynasty. Taizong had killed his brothers, including his older brother Li Jiancheng 李建城, who was the heir-apparent, and usurped the throne from his father. This was certainly conduct unbecoming of the Son of Heaven, and Taizong took a keen interest in how it was depicted in the historical record. However, once he became emperor, Taizong reigned over one of the greatest golden ages in Chinese history, the peaceful Zhenguan 貞觀 (627-649) era. Not only was this long reign characterized by peace and prosperity, Taizong was famous for his deference to wise advisers, most notably Wei Zheng 魏徵 (580-643), in bringing about this peaceful reign⁵⁵. If Tang Gaozu had received the Mandate of Heaven, and it was meant to pass to

⁵³ SKQS Tang jian 1:3

⁵⁴ SKQS Xin Tang shu 84:7

⁵⁵For a book length study of Wei Zheng, see *Mirror to the Son of Heaven: Wei Cheng at the Court of T'ang T'ai-tsung* by Howard Wechsler, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974

his eldest son Li Jiancheng, then Tang Taizong's usurpation of the throne should not have been rewarded by Heaven with such a long and peaceful reign. On the other hand, if it was Taizong himself who received the Mandate of Heaven, he is still guilty of being unfilial before coming to power, but his subsequent peaceful reign does not call into question the theory of the Mandate of Heaven.

Furthermore, Song literati, as I will argue in the following chapter, had a vested interest in promoting the idea that good emperors are those who defer to their advisers. The relationship between Taizong and Wei Zheng exemplified this ideal. Consequently, it would seem that Song historians had no motivation to rehabilitate Tang Gaozu's image as the actual founder of the Tang dynasty, despite having reliable evidence available to do so in the form of Wen Daya's Diary. Although the Song historians do criticize Tang Taizong for killing his brothers, they are complicit in the myth of Taizong as the real leader behind Gaozu's uprising, and content to perpetuate the image of Gaozu as a duplicitous and indecisive figurehead, in order to legitimate the Zhenguan reign as an appropriate model for subsequent generations.

The Appearance of Laozi

The results from the comparison above are very useful in understanding Song historians' methodology. However, the nature of the comparison—analyzing historical episodes which are recounted in all of the sources being considered—excludes the analysis of historical episodes included in some texts but not in others. Even in their revisions of history Song authors remained relatively faithful to the sources they used; it is by the decision of what

to include and what to omit from the sources that they were able to recast Tang history. So in a sense, the passages narrated in all of the sources may reveal less about the historical revisions than those passages narrated in some texts but not in others. Incidents related in some texts but omitted in others show which issues were waxing or waning in importance during the 11th century, when the historical accounts were compiled. Furthermore, in a culture where inclusion or omission from the historical record was a widely acknowledged means of critique believed to date back to Confucius' compilation of the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, investigating only those historical episodes that were included in all of the sources under consideration obfuscates the interesting editorial issue of which episodes were included by some authors and excluded by others. One such example from the founding era involves the appearance of the deity Laozi 老子. The source for this historical material is not the *Diary*, but the “Veritable Records for the Reign of Emperor Gaozu.”

Although the “Veritable Records for the Reign of Emperor Gaozu” do not survive, the account of this episode from the Veritable Record is preserved as an excerpt in at least three other early texts. The *Tang Mirror* reports that in the third year of the Wude reign period (620), the deity Laozi appeared on Goat Horn mountain (Yangjiao shan 羊角山) with the message that he was the ancestor of the Li family, the royal house of Tang. This incident is not recorded in the *Old Tang History* or the *New Tang History*, nor is it mentioned in the *Diary of Activity and Repose*. However it is mentioned in a number of other early sources. A comparison of the *Tang Mirror* with these other texts suggests

that once again Fan Zuyu is quoting an excerpt from his primary source, and that in this case the primary source is not the *Diary of Activity and Repose* but the *Veritable Records* for the reign of Emperor Gaozu.

The other early texts which narrate the appearance of Laozi at Goat Horn mountain are: the *Tang hui yao* (early 10th c.) 唐會要, the *Feng shi wen jian ji* 封氏聞見記(early 9th c.), and the *Jin shi lu* 金石錄(early 12th c.). Although the *Veritable Records* from Gaozu's reign have been lost, the *Jin shi lu* (Record of Bronze and Stone Inscriptions) preserves the account of Laozi's appearance from the *Veritable Records for the Reign of Emperor Gaozu*. The *Record of Bronze and Stone Inscriptions*, like the *Tang Mirror*, was compiled during the Song dynasty, when the *Veritable Records* from Gaozu's reign were still available to the authors.

The *Record of Bronze and Stone Inscriptions*, as the name suggests, is a collection of inscriptions which the author, Zhao Mingcheng 趙明誠(1081-1129), critically examines in comparison to other historical sources. In discussing an inscription at Dragon Horn Mountain (Longjiao shan 龍角山) Zhao compares the inscription to the definitive account from the *Veritable Records* for Emperor Gaozu. Thus the excerpt from the *Veritable Records* is preserved within this text, as follows:

According to the *Veritable Records* of Emperor Gaozu, in the fourth month of the third year of the *Wude* reign period [620] on the day *xinsi*, a person of Jinzhou, Ji Shanxing, at Goat Horn Mountain saw an old man clad in white riding a white horse with a red mane. He said to Shanxing: “On my behalf, tell the Tang Son of Heaven, 'I am Laozi, and your ancestor. After pacifying the bandits this year you

shall become Emperor. All under heaven will be peaceful for a hundred years, and your sons and grandsons will serve the nation for a thousand years.' Taizong sent the official Du Ang to offer sacrifices. In an instant the spirit again appeared and said to Ang, 'Return and tell the emperor I won't eat it. Why trouble with making sacrifices?' Gaozu marveled at it and erected a temple on this ground.”

撰按高祖實錄武德三年四月辛巳晉州人吉善行於羊角山見白衣老父乘白馬朱鬣謂善行曰為吾語唐天子吾為老君汝祖也今年平賊後汝當為帝天下太平必得百年享國子孫且千歲太宗遣使者杜昂致祭須臾神復見謂昂曰歸語天子我不食何煩祭為高祖異之立廟於其地⁵⁶

This event is also recorded in two other earlier sources, although neither of these other two attributes the text to the “Veritable Record of Emperor Gaozu.” A similar, but slightly briefer, account of this same event occurs in the earlier text, the *Feng shi wen jian ji* 封氏聞見記 (Mister Feng's Records of Things Seen and Heard), which was compiled around the year 800 by Feng Yan 封演. Under the subject of “Daoism” (道教 *daojiao*), Feng gives the following account:

In the third year of the *Wude* reign period [620] of Emperor Gaozu, a person of Jinzhou, Ji Shanxing, at Goat Horn Mountain saw an old man clad in white . He called out to Shanxing and said to him: “On my behalf tell the Tang Son of Heaven, 'I am Laozi, and I am your ancestor. This year there will be no bandits, and all under heaven will be at peace.' Gaozu then dispatched an officer to make sacrifices and erect a temple on this ground, and changed the name of *Fu* Mountain county to Spirit Mountain.

高祖武德三年晉州人吉善行於羊角山見白衣老父呼善行謂曰為我語唐天子吾是老君即汝祖也今年無賊天下太平高祖即遣使致祭立廟于其地遂改浮山縣為神山⁵⁷

The content of this account differs from the excerpt of the *Veritable*

⁵⁶ SKQS Jin shi lu 26: 8-9

⁵⁷ SKQS Feng shi wen xian ji 封氏聞見記 1:1

Records on three points: it does not depict Laozi riding a white horse with a red mane; Laozi does not predict that the Tang will rule for hundreds and thousands of years, only that there will be peace; it is Gaozu, not Taizong, that dispatches the officer to make sacrifices.

Another version of this event appears in the *Tang hui yao* 唐會要, a classified collection of documents compiled during the Five Dynasties period (mid-tenth century). In this text, as in Mr. Feng's text, this event is classified under Daoism, in this case under the heading "Venerating Daoism" (尊崇道教 *zunchong daojiao*). The *Tang hui yao* account more closely resembles the text from the *Record of Inscriptions on Bronze and Stone* than it does the account in Mr. Feng's *Records of Things Seen and Heard*. The *Tang hui yao* account is as follows:

In the fifth month of the third year of the *Wude* reign period, a person of Jinzhou, Ji Shanxing, at Goat Horn Mountain saw an old man riding a white horse with a red mane, magnificent in appearance, saying: "On my behalf tell the prince of Tang 'I am your ancestor. This year, after pacifying the bandits, your sons and grandsons will serve the state for a thousand years.'" Gaozu marveled at it and built a temple on this ground.

武德三年五月晉州人吉善行於羊角山見一老叟乘白馬朱鬣儀容甚偉曰為吾語唐天子吾汝祖也今年平賊後子孫享國千歲高祖異之乃立廟於其地⁵⁸

Although not identical to the account in the *Records of Bronze and Stone Inscriptions*, it shares with that text the mention of the white horse with the red mane, and the prediction that the house of Tang will not only pacify the empire, but also rule for a thousand years. It does not specify whether Taizong or Gaozu

⁵⁸ SKQS *Tang hui yao* 50.1

initially sent an official to the site, only that Gaozu later built a temple there.

The account in the *Tang Mirror* is most closely related to that in the *Records of Inscriptions on Bronze and Stone* and *Mr. Feng's Record of Things Seen and Heard*. Given that the *Records of Inscriptions on Bronze and Stone* is quoting from the *Veritable Records* of the reign of Gaozu, the logical conclusion is that each of these sources is quoting from the *Veritable Records*.

Neither the *Old Tang History* nor the *New Tang History* recount the conversation between Laozi and Ji Shanxing. However both of these texts do mention, in the geographical treatises, that in the 4th year of the *Wude* reign period (621), the name of the district was changed from *Fu shan* to *Shen shan* in honor of to the ancestral temple to Laozi.

The comparison of versions of the event of Laozi's appearance at Goat Horn mountain suggests that the *Veritable Records for the Reign of Emperor Gaozu* were edited over time to emphasize the role of Taizong at the expense of the reputation of Gaozu. Also, the exclusion of this event from the *Old Tang History* and the *New Tang History* imply that this supernatural event was doubted by the editors of the official Tang histories. However, this should not be taken to mean that the *Tang Mirror* puts more stock in this supernatural prophecy than the official histories do. In fact, when taking into consideration the critique of the event which follows in the *Tang Mirror*, it becomes clear that Fan Zuyu has included this anecdote for the sole purpose of debunking it. In his critique, Fan Zuyu says that, unlike the veneration of ancestral deities in the Shang and Zhou eras,

...Tang's origin from Laozi comes from the words of a supernatural being, and those who flatter and fawn making a forced explanation of it. Gaozu started it at first, Gaozong and Minghuang then fanned this superstition and further made use of the deceitful and absurd persuasions, elevating Laozi to the position of Shang Di. It debases Heaven and slanders the ancestors, opposing the Way to the extreme...

唐之出於老子由妖人之言而謠諛者附會之高祖啓其原高宗明皇扇其風又用方士詭誕之說躋老子於上帝卑天誣祖悖道甚矣⁵⁹

In this case, then, the exclusion of this material from the official histories, and its inclusion in the *Tang Mirror*, represent not a difference of opinion about the veracity of the event, but rather a different approach to how to convey doubts about that veracity: exclusion from the record in the official history, and explicit criticism of the event in the *Tang Mirror*. This explicit criticism is a distinctive feature of the genre of historical criticism which emerged during the Northern Song, and which will be explored further in the following chapter.

Sun Fuqie admonishes Gaozu

The final episode I will consider from the Tang founding period is the admonition of Gaozu by the official Sun Fuqie at the beginning of the reign. The official Sun Fuqie presented three memorials on proper moral behavior, which appear in the *Tang Mirror*, the *Old Tang History* and the *New Tang History*, but do not appear in the Diary. Based on the text of the memorials preserved in other early sources, it is clear that once again the *Tang Mirror* gives brief excerpts from each of these memorials while the *Old Tang History* includes a virtually complete transcription of the contents of each of the memorials. And once again, the *New*

⁵⁹ SKQS Tang jian ch. 1 p. 9

Tang History re-writes the contents of the memorials in altered language, rather than just including the original text.

We can surmise that the text in the *Old Tang History* replicates that of the original memorials, because the content of the memorials appear in whole or in part in other sources from the Tang and Song period, and in every case the sources are nearly identical to the text contained in the *Old Tang History* rather than to that in the *New Tang History*. These other sources are the *Tang xin yu* (唐新語) which was compiled in the early Tang period and includes excerpts from two of the memorials, and the *Ce fu yuan gui* (冊府元龜), compiled in the early Northern Song, which contains the memorials once in *juan* 531, which is identical to the version in the *Old Tang History*, and once in *juan* 542, which differs only slightly from it. The text of these three memorials, as preserved in the *Old Tang History* and the *Ce fu yuan gui* is as follows:

The first said: Your servant has heard, if the Son of Heaven has remonstrating ministers, although he lacks the Way he will not lose the empire; if a father has remonstrating sons, although he lacks the Way, he will not sink into unrighteousness. Therefore it is said: sons cannot not remonstrate with their fathers, ministers cannot not remonstrate with their rulers. The reason, according to this saying, is that a minister's service to his ruler is like a son's service to his father. What is the way in which the last ruler of the Sui lost the empire? It was simply not listening to his faults. At that time there was not a lack of straight talking officers. Due to the ruler's not accepting criticism, and declaring his own virtue to exceed that of Tang Yao, and his own accomplishments to surpass those of Xia Yu, he exhausted the extreme excess of his appetites in the debauchery of his heart. The officers of the empire laid down their life in service, households were squandered and lost, thieves and bandits daily increased without anyone realizing or knowing it, all because the ministers at court would not dare to inform him. If he had restored the laws of a stern father, opened the path of direct speech, selected the wise and entrusted the able, rewards and

punishments would have been accurate and people would all enjoy their occupation, who could have been able to overthrow him?

In this way the former court encouraged upheaval, by not following ancient exhortations. This was Heaven beguiling their shortcomings in order to begin the sage Tang dynasty of today. Your highness arose like a dragon in Jinyang, and all under Heaven responded. Plotting in no time at all the great founding was gloriously established. Your highness must not, due to the ease of the Tang's attaining the empire, not know that the Sui's loss of it was not difficult. Your honor is esteemed as the Son of Heaven, and is blessed to possess the empire. Move and the recorder of the left writes it, speak and the recorder of the right writes it. Since you are restrained by the bamboo and silk, how could you abandon yourself to passion without caution? In all cases of collecting and hunting, accord with the four seasons. Since you represent the patterns of Heaven, how could you recklessly act against the seasons? Your Honor on the 20th day ascends the throne, on the 21st day there are flatterers who present you with falcon chicks. This comes from the false customs of the prior court, they are matters for juveniles, how could they carelessly be practiced now! I have also heard that the Minister of State Adjutant Lu Mouzi 盧牟子 performs on the pipa, the Counselor-in-Chief of Chang'an District Zhang Andao 張安道 shows off his bow and arrow, and they are frequently rewarded. But all beneath the skies, none of it is not the king's territory; in all of the states territories, no one is not the kings' servant. No matter what it is that Your Honor desires, how could you seek it and not obtain it? How could it be that these are what Your Honor lacks!? I desire that Your Honor scrutinize whether I your humble minister is foolish or devoted, in order that the empire will be greatly fortunate.

萬年縣法曹武德元年初以三事上諫其一曰臣聞天子有諍臣雖無道不失其天下父有諍子雖無道不陷于不義故云子不可不諍於父臣不可不諍於君以此言之臣之事君猶子之事父故也隋後主所以失天下者何也止為不聞其過當時非無直言之士由君不受諫自謂德盛唐堯功過夏禹窮侈極慾以恣其心天下之士肝腦塗地戶口減耗盜賊日滋而不覺知者皆由朝臣不敢告之也向使修嚴父之法開直言之路選賢任能賞罰得中人人樂業誰能搖動者乎所以前朝好為變更不師古訓者止為天誘其咎將以開今聖唐也陛下龍舉晉陽天下響應計不旋踵大位遂隆陛下勿以唐得天下之易不知隋失之不難也陛下貴為天子富有天下動則左史書之言則右史書之既為竹帛所拘何可恣情不慎凡有蒐狩須順四時既代天理安得非時妄動陛下二十日龍飛二十一日有獻鷄鵠者此乃前朝之弊風少年之事務何忽今日行之又聞相國參軍事盧牟子獻琵琶長安縣丞張安道獻弓箭頻蒙賞勞但普天之下莫非王土率土之濱莫非王臣陛下必有所欲何求而不得陛下

所少者豈此物哉願陛下察臣愚忠則天下幸甚⁶⁰

The second read: hundreds of dramas and various songs, at root are not the correct tones. When it came to the end of the Sui, they were greatly patronized, this is called the customs of licentiousness, they cannot not be rectified. Recently the Chamberlain for Ceremonials borrowed over 500 women's skirts and silk tops from among the people to supplement the wardrobe of the harem, intending to perform at the Xuan Wu gate on the 5th day of the 5th month. In my humble opinion be cautious, this truly will damage the progress of the Emperor. It is not that which is a model for sons and descendents, or a pattern for later generations. Thus the Book of Documents says: “Do not dismiss complaints, assuming that they are harmless since they are small.”⁶¹ The reason being for fear that from small complaints they will become large. The Analects says: “Fend off the sounds of Zheng, distance the flatterers.” It also says “If there is music, it ought to be the Dance of 'Shao' [from the time of the sage Shun].” The various female singers certainly are not the music of accomplishment. If I your humble minister is foolish, please dismiss me, so that the great fortune of the empire will be unsurpassed.

其二曰百戲散樂本非正聲有隋之末大見崇用此謂淫風不可不改近者太常官司於人間借婦女裙襦五百餘具以充散妓之服云擬五月五日於玄武門遊戲臣竊思審實損皇猷亦非貽厥子孫謀為後代法也故書云無以小怨為無傷而弗去⁶²恐從小至於大故也論語云放鄭聲遠佞人又云樂則韶舞以此言之散妓定非功成之樂也如臣愚見請並廢之則天下不勝幸甚⁶³

The third said: Your servant has heard that by nature we aid those close, by practice we aid those distant, so that one is influenced by what one enjoys. Thus the Book of Documents says: “Those on the same Way as the orderly, none do not triumph; those of the same conduct as the disorderly, none do not perish.”⁶⁴ By this it says order and disorder are at hand! The crown prince and the feudal lords and the other groups of colleagues at your sides, you cannot entrust them without being selective. According to your servant's humble opinion, any one who is without righteousness, cannot rely upon their ancestors. The household cannot be ostentatious

⁶⁰ SKQS Jiu Tang shu 75:10-11

⁶¹ This quotation is in fact from the Appendices to the Zhou yi, not from the Book of Documents.

⁶² The quotation, although identified by Sun as from the Book of Documents, is actually from the Appendices to the *Zhou Yi* (周易 Book of Changes) which reads 以小惡為无傷而弗去也 . See SKQS Zhou yi zhu 8: 5

⁶³ SKQS Jiu Tang shu 75:11

⁶⁴ See SKQS Shang shu zhu shu 尚書註疏 7:34 for the *locus classicus* of the quoted text

enjoying the company of those who revel in riding and hunting and archery. People who specialize in herding and pasturing dogs and horses, singing and displaying songs and dances, should not get to serve closely and approach the emperor. This kind can please the eyes and ears and prepare swift horses to ride, but when it comes to collecting precedents and improving faults, they certainly are unable to do so. Your servant, peering back through history to the ancients, and gazing down on this generation, whenever it reaches the point that heirs are not filial and brothers are divided, in no case was it not made so by the disorderliness of those surrounding them. I urge Your Honor to ingeniously select the wise and talented to be the companions and friends of the crown prince, and so have a prosperous and rock solid foundation for an eternally steadfast royal line.

Gaozu received his memorials with great pleasure.

其三曰臣聞性相近而習相遠以其所好相染也故書云與治同道罔弗興與亂同事罔弗亡⁶⁵以此言之興亂其在斯與皇太子及諸王等左右群僚不可不擇而任之也如臣愚見但是無義之人及先來無賴家門不能邕睦及好奢華馳獵馭射專作慢遊狗馬聲色歌舞之人不得使親而近之也此等止可悅耳目備驅馳至於拾遺補闕決不能為也臣歷窺往古下觀近代至於子孫不孝兄弟離間莫不為左右亂之也願陛下妙選賢才以為皇太子僚友如此即克隆盤石永固維城矣高祖覽之大悅⁶⁶

In this instance, unlike in those examined above, the *New Tang History* gives a more detailed account than the *Tang Mirror*, which contains an extremely brief synopsis of the contents of the three memorials. However, despite the length and detail of the *New Tang History* account, the language of the memorials are extensively edited. A comparison of the language from the *New Tang History* with that of the *Old Tang History* and the *Tang Mirror* appears in Appendix 2.

The brief account from the *Tang Mirror* is translated below:

The Administrator of Laws for Wannian district, Sun Fuqie (?-658), submitted a memorial saying, “Sui lost the empire by hating to listen to criticism. It is fitting to change the ruts of their overturned cart and to attend to the utmost to the circumstances of those below. The conveyance of the peoples’ words cannot be indirect.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ SKQS Jiu Tang shu 75:10-12

Your honor today ascends the throne, tomorrow there will be flatterers presenting you with falcon chicks.” Also, “Hundreds of dramas and various songs are the infectious sounds of a lost kingdom. Recently the Chamberlain for Ceremonials (*taichang*) borrowed women’s skirts and silk tops from among the people to supplement the wardrobe of the harem, intending to stage a performance at the Xuan Wu gate on the 5th day of the 5th month. This is not a model for [the dynasty's] sons and descendents.” It also said, “the various kings whom the prince visits as colleagues, it is fitting to carefully choose these men.” Gaozu considered the memorial and was greatly pleased, sent down a decree praising him an promoting him to be Secretarial Censor [*zhi shu yu shi*] and awarded him 300 bolts of silk. He proclaimed and made it known far and near.

萬年縣法曹孫伏伽上表以為隋以惡聞其過亡天下宜易其覆轍務盡下情人君言動不可不慎陛下今日即位而明日有獻鷄雛者又百戲散樂亡國淫聲近太常於民間借婦女裙襦以充妓衣擬五月五日元武門遊戲非所以為子孫法也又言太子諸王參僚宜謹擇其人帝省表大悅下詔褒稱擢為治書御史賜帛三百匹頒示遠近

Your servant Zuyu says, “When a kingdom is about to arise it must reward remonstrating servants. When a kingdom is about to fall, it in all cases kills remonstrating servants.⁶⁷ Thus those who remonstrate and receive rewards are the auspiciousness of ascendancy, those who remonstrate and are killed are the omen of decline. All Under Heaven is like the body of man. In all bodies *qi* and blood must circulate and flow, without anything obstructing the foundation⁶⁸ and then it will be able to exist. Remonstrators cause the circumstances of those below to get communicated to the ruler above, and the intentions of the ruler above to reach the people below, just as *qi* and blood circulate within a body. Thus when the path of communication is open there is order, and when the path of communication is obstructed there is chaos. Orderliness and chaos are bound to the path of communication, and that is all. Gaozu examined that by which Sui fell. Upon first founding the kingdom and in the initial phases of various affairs, to open up the path of communication in order to transmit the sentiments of those below can be called knowing what is top priority. In this way all within the seas hear of this custom like the feverish being able to bathe, or the crippled being able to stand up. The people know of the ruler’s

⁶⁷ [Guo yu Jin yu 國晉語興 王賞諫臣逸王罰之]

⁶⁸ [Mengzi Preface 孟序正? 辛 □ □ 底]

concern for themselves, and the sick and suffering will soon have that for which they are petitioning.⁶⁹ The rise of the House of Tang, was it not so appropriate?

臣祖禹曰國將興必賞諫臣國將亡必殺諫臣故諫而受賞者興之祥也諫而被殺者亡之兆也天下如人之一身夫身必氣血周流無所壅底而後能存焉諫者使下情得以上通上意得以下達如氣血之周流於一身也故言路開則治言路塞則亂治亂者繫乎言路而已高祖鑒隋之所以亡王業初基庶事草創而首闢言路以通下情可謂知所先務矣是以海內聞風如熱者之得濯廢者之得起民知上之憂已而疾痛將有所赴愬也唐室之興不亦宜乎

The above analysis of the treatment of primary source material from the Tang period in Song historiography of the Tang illustrates the broader pattern of revision in Song historiography. Emphasis on the preservation of primary sources declines. As can be seen above, primary material which is reproduced almost in its entirety in the *Old Tang History* is severely edited in the *New Tang History* and in the *Tang Mirror*. The methods of rewording vary, with the *New Tang History* demonstrating a tendency to summarize and revise source material, and the *Tang Mirror* demonstrating a tendency to quote excerpts from source materials, although each of these books does in fact use both of these methods. Furthermore, the *Tang Mirror* does seem to differentiate between references to the written correspondence in the primary sources, which are quoted in excerpts, and references to reported speech, which are more loosely summarized.

Differences in the methods of revision are due at least in part to differences between the conventions of the genre of official dynastic history (*New Tang History*) and the genre of historical criticism (*Tang Mirror*). But what both of these revisions share is a shift in emphasis away from the text of the

⁶⁹ [Mengzi 孟天下有 疾其君者皆赴愬於王]

source documents and towards the historian's interpretation of those texts by various means. The following chapter on the historians' critiques will further investigate the implications of this shift.

The Veritable Record of the Emperor Shunzong

In addition to the *Diary of Activity and Repose for the Founding of the Tang Dynasty*, the other official primary source extant from the Tang dynasty is the *Shunzong shilu* 順宗實錄 (Veritable Records of the Reign of the Emperor Shunzong). This source survives because it was compiled by the famous literatus Han Yu 韓愈, and the text was included in his collected works. It has been the subject of a detailed study and critical translation by Bernard Solomon, and I have utilized his work extensively in my own investigation of this text.

Because Shunzong suffered a debilitating stroke which left him unable to speak, his reign lasted less than a year, from February 28, 805 to August 31, 805, after which he abdicated in favor of the heir apparent. However, the *Veritable Records of the Reign of the Emperor Shunzong* also includes accounts of a number of events which took place during the long lasting reign of his father, Dezong 德宗 (reigned 780-805). As a result, the *Veritable Records* provides the source material for a number of events which are recounted in *The Old Tang History*, *The New Tang History*, and *The Tang Mirror*. Below I will compare and analyze the different versions that these texts present for a number of these events in comparison with the source material in the *Veritable Records*.

Han Yu's significance as the progenitor of “ancient style” writing and his influence on the Northern Song literati whose historical texts are the subject of

this dissertation will be discussed in detail in the subsequent chapter on the ancient style prose movement. As I will show, this historical text, although composed by Han Yu, was not considered representative of his ancient style prose and seems instead to have followed the conventional style. In this section I will examine the content of the “Veritable Record of the Tang Emperor Shunzong” in comparison to the depiction of the events which took place immediately prior to and during Shunzong's reign as depicted in the *Old Tang History*, the *New Tang History* and the *Tang Mirror*.

While still heir-apparent, Shunzong was afflicted with a stroke that left him unable to speak. In order to maintain stability and effect an orderly transition of authority at the end of the long reign of his father Emperor Dezong 德宗, Shunzong acceded to the throne despite his affliction. However, when it became clear that he was not going to recover his ability to speak, he abdicated in favor of the subsequent heir apparent. Shunzong's stroke, Dezong's death, and Shunzong's ascension to the throne are recorded in the *Veritable Records*, the *Tang Mirror*, and both the *Old Tang History* and the *New Tang History*. The competing accounts give varying weight to the circumstances surrounding Dezong's death, and the circumstances surrounding Shunzong's enthronement.

Shunzong's stroke and Dezong's death were not merely a family tragedy. These events posed a political threat to the peaceful transition of power from emperor to heir. It is this political event which is the focus of the narrative in the *Tang Mirror*. And the accomplishment of a peaceful succession of power is attributed to different persons in the *Tang Mirror*, the *Veritable Records* and in

various chapters of the official Tang histories.

In the *Veritable Records*, Shunzong overcomes the anxieties of the officials by making an official public appearance, showing that despite his illness he is capable and determined to assume the duties of emperor:

On the twenty-third day (February 25, 805), Shunzong, aware of the grief and doubts of all within the palace and without, appeared at the *Jiuxian* gate in purple robes and hemp sandals without even taking the time to adjust his cap, and there summoned into his presence the various military envoys. The anxieties of the capital were thus somewhat allayed. On the twenty-fourth day (February 26, 805), the posthumous decree was proclaimed, and Shunzong, in mourning garments, received the officials in audience. On the twenty-sixth day (February 28, 805), he ascended the throne.⁷⁰

二十三日知內外憂疑紫衣麻鞋不俟正冠出九仙門召見諸軍使京師稍安二十四日宣遺詔上縗服見百寮二十六日即位⁷¹

In Shunzong's basic annals in the *Old Tang History*, the stabilization of political sentiment is similarly attributed to Shunzong's appearance at the *Jiuxian* gate:

“He overcame his illness and appeared in mourning garb before the various officials at the *Jiuxian* gate, and then ascended the throne. Knowing the altars of grain had offerings, those within and without [the palace] began to be reassured.”

上力疾衰服見百寮於九仙門既即位知社稷有奉中外始安⁷²

In the Shunzong basic annals of the *New Tang History*, no mention is made of there being any difficulties in the transition of power from Dezong to Shunzong whatsoever.

“On the day *bing shen*, he ascended the throne in the Taiji Palace. In the second

⁷⁰ Bernard S. Solomon, *The Veritable Records of the Tang Emperor Shun-tsung*, p. 3

⁷¹ SKQS Dong ya tang chang li ji zhu, wai ji zhu 6:4

⁷² SKQS Jiu Tang shu 14:1

month on the day *gui mao*, he held court with the group of government servants at the Zichen Gate.”

丙申即皇帝位于太極殿二月癸卯朝羣臣于紫宸門⁷³

In contrast, the *Tang Mirror* focuses on the power struggle that ensues after the death of Dezong, and does not attribute the successful transition of power to Shunzong's public appearance, but instead to the actions of the upright official Wei Cigong 衛次公 who thwarted an attempt by the eunuchs to challenge Shunzong's ability to reign.

On the cyclic day *guisi* the emperor died. The Hanlin Academicians Zheng Yin, Wei Cigong and others were hurriedly summoned to the *Jinluan* palace to draw up the posthumous instructions of the dying emperor. Some of the eunuchs said “The arguments among those in the inner palace to establish an heir have not yet been settled.” None of the group dared to reply. Cigong abruptly spoke saying “The prince, although ill, occupies the position of next in the bloodline, the minds of those within and outside the palace must not be otherwise, we still must establish the King of Guangling [Shunzong's eldest son, who subsequently became Emperor Xianzong 憲宗]. Otherwise, there will certainly be large-scale chaos.” Yin and the others followed him in agreement, and the argument was settled.

癸巳帝崩蒼猝召翰林學士鄭綱衛次公等至金鑾殿草遺詔宦官或曰禁中議所立尚未定衆莫敢對次公遽言曰太子雖有疾地居冢嫡中外屬心必不得已猶應立廣陵王不然必大亂綱等從而和之議始定⁷⁴

This emphasis on the role of upright officials in the *Tang Mirror* is a consistent editorial stance in the text, which will be explored further in the next chapter. However, to see this emphasis as uniquely characteristic of the *Tang Mirror* would be a mistake. The role of Wei Cigong in the peaceful transition of

⁷³ SKQS Xin Tang shu 7:21

⁷⁴ SXQS Tang jian 16:10

power is in fact recorded in both the *Old Tang History* and the *New Tang History*, just not in the basic annals. When we turn to the biographies of Wei Cigong in these two texts, we find that both texts do record his role in safeguarding Shunzong's place as the next emperor. And, consistent with the pattern found in other passages, the *Old Tang History* and the *Tang Mirror* coincide almost verbatim, while the *New Tang History* conveys the same event in different words.

The *Old Tang History* records the event as follows:

In the first month of the twenty-first year, at the time when Dezong was about to pass away, the Eastern Palace [crown prince Shunzong] was also extremely ill. The Han Lin Academicians Zheng Yin et. al. came to the Jinluan Palace. Some people said, “the inner palace negotiations regarding the heir have yet to be settled.” The group had no reply. Cigong abruptly spoke, saying, “The crown prince, although ill, occupies the position of next in the bloodline. The minds of the people within and without the palace must not be otherwise. Then we must establish the King of Guangling [Shunzong's eldest son, who subsequently became Emperor Xianzong 憲宗]. If there is any other plan, misfortune and difficulties will be unending.” Yin and the others followed, and with the support of the group settled the argument.

二十一年正月德宗昇遐時東宮疾恙方甚倉卒召學士鄭綱等至金鑾殿中人或云
內中商量所立未定衆人未對次公遽言曰皇太子雖有疾地居冢嫡內外繫心必不得已當
立廣陵王若有異圖禍難未已綱等隨而唱之衆議方定⁷⁵

The *New Tang History* also records this event in Wei Cigong's biography. As in the other cases, the *New Tang History* presents a succinct summation of the event, but does not duplicate either the narration or the reported speech of the characters described:

⁷⁵ SKQS Jiu Tang shu 159:1-2, see also SKQS Tang hui yao 57:5

When Dezong died, Zheng Yin and the rest were summoned to the Jinluan palace. At that time, the crown prince had been sick for a while. Some in the inner palace had the intentions of altering who would be enthroned. The crowd was upset. Cigong said, “The crown prince, although sick for a long time, is the next in the bloodline. Within and without have long been in agreement.” Yin followed in support, and the dispute was settled.

德宗崩與鄭綱皆召至金鑾殿時皇太子久疾禁中或傳更議所立衆失色次公曰太子雖久疾冢嫡也內外係心久矣必不得已宜立廣陵王綱隨贊之議乃定⁷⁶

Once again, the *New Tang History* preserves the content, but revises the language, of the source text. For a detailed comparison of the language of the three sources see Appendix 3.

The six month period of Shunzong's reign was dominated by the machinations of the chancellor Wang Shuwen 王叔文(d. 806) who had gained favor with Shunzong before his stroke when he was still heir apparent, and took advantage of his position to gain power for himself and his allies and subvert the proper bureaucratic channels of authority.

Below are two accounts of how Wang Shuwen curried favor with Shunzong both of which are from the *Veritable Records*. The first appears at the beginning of the text when Shunzong is crown prince. The second appears at the end of the text as a flashback to contextualize Wang Shuwen's banishment at the end of Shunzong's reign. In this way Han Yu reemphasizes the influence of Wang Shuwen on Shunzong's reign from beginning to end.

Shunzong had studied calligraphy under Wang Pei, who was high in his favor. Wang Shuwen had advanced his position through his skill as a chess player. Both were appointed Attendants in the

⁷⁶ SKQS Xin Tang shu 164:13

Hanlin Academy and often played chess with Shunzong while he was still heir apparent. Shuwen was cunning and wily, and a resourceful plotter. Once when Shunzong, while still heir apparent, was in his quarters discussing government affairs with Shuwen and some Tutors, they brought up the subject of “palace marketing.” Shunzong said, “I am prepared to discuss this matter exhaustively [with Emperor Dezong].” Everyone praised him with the exception of Shuwen who was the only one who said nothing. When they left, Shunzong detained Shuwen alone and said, “Why were you the only one to remain silent a while ago? What did you mean by it?”

Shuwen replied, “The heir apparent affords me great favor. When I observe something, do I dare fail to inform him? The heir-apparent's duties are properly those of waiting upon his parents and inquiring after their health. It is improper for him to discuss outside matters. Your father, the Emperor, has been on the throne a long time. If he suspected that the heir-apparent was trying to gain control of the people's favor, how would the heir-apparent explain himself?”

With great astonishment, Shunzong tearfully said, “Without you, my teacher, I would have no means of knowing this,” and thereafter grew very attached to him. He and Wang Pei made an alliance, and both had free access to the heir-apparent's palace. Hearing of Dezong's critical condition and knowing that the heir-apparent was ill and unable to speak, Pei entered the palace and with an edict summoned Shuwen there to seat him in the Hanlin Academy to deliberate. Pei would go to the eunuch Li Zhongyan with Shuwen's suggestions, and on this basis they forged edicts which they passed down as if from the throne. There was no one who knew of this on the outside.⁷⁷

上學書於王伾頗有寵王叔文以暮進俱待詔翰林數侍太子暮叔文詭譎多計上在東宮嘗與諸侍讀并叔文論政至宮市事上曰寡人方欲極言之衆皆稱贊獨叔文無言既退上獨留叔文謂曰向者君奚獨無言豈有意邪叔文曰叔文蒙幸太子有所見敢不以聞太子職當侍膳問安不宜言外事陛下在位久如疑太子收人心何以自解

上大驚因泣曰非先生寡人無以知此！遂大愛幸與王伾兩人相依附俱出入東宮聞德宗大漸上疾不能言伾即入以詔召叔文入坐翰林中使決事伾以叔文意入言於宦者李忠言稱詔行下外初無知者⁷⁸

[Wang] Shuwen was a native of Yuezhou and had gained the heir apparent's favor by his skill at chess. He was inclined to boast about his knowledge of the art of governing which he derived from

⁷⁷ Bernard Solomon pp. 3-4

⁷⁸ SKQS Dong ya tang chang li zhu, wai ji zhu 6: 4-5

reading books. He often took the opportunity to advise the heir apparent about the suffering of the people and once, when the heir apparent was on the point of discoursing at length on the subject of palace marketing, the views held by [Wang] Shuwen met with the heir apparent's approval. As a result, he (Wang Shuwen) gained his favor and subsequently said to him, "So-and-so should be a general, and so-and-so should be a minister. I hope you will employ them at a future date (i.e., when you are Emperor)."⁷⁹

叔文越州人以暮入東宮頗自言讀書知理道乘間常言人間疾苦上將大論宮市事叔文說
中上意遂有寵因為上言某可為將某可為相幸異日用之⁸⁰

Wang Shuwen's manipulation of Shunzong is recorded in both the *Old Tang History* and the *New Tang History*. In each of these official histories, the episode is mentioned briefly in the basic annals of Shunzong, and described in detail in the biography of Wang Shuwen. However, neither the *Old Tang History* nor the *New Tang History* follow the *Veritable Records* verbatim, nor are the accounts in the two official histories identical with one another. The *Tang Mirror* does not give a detailed account of the event as in the other three sources, but does provide a brief account of Shuwen's manipulation of Shunzong and the development of his faction. Again this fourth account expresses the same events but is not clearly drawn from any of the other three accounts directly.

In a subsequent passage, however, the *Tang Mirror* elaborates on the evils of the palace marketing system which Wang Shuwen had discouraged Shunzong from discussing with Dezong. Wang Shuwen's complicity in the "palace marketing" system, whereby eunuchs abused their power and extorted goods from the populace to supply the palace, is singled out for detailed censure in the

⁷⁹ Bernard Solomon p. 54

⁸⁰ SKQS Dong ya tang chang li zhu, wai ji zhu 10: 2-3

Tang Mirror. This passage is clearly drawn from the *Veritable Records*, as they are almost identical:

In the past, whenever the palace had to buy goods on the outside, certain officials were ordered to take charge and would do their purchasing with the people and then pay them accordingly. At the end of the Zhenyuan (785-805) period, eunuchs were put in charge, and they employed oppressive buying tactics, so that the price they paid was far from the original value of the goods. During the closing years, they no longer used their credentials. They stationed several hundred “watchmen for free goods” in the two Chang'an markets and the key business quarters. They would examine the goods for sale and had only to announce that they were purchasing for the palace for the seller to hand over the articles obediently. The merchant was no longer able to ascertain whether they were telling him the truth, and there was no one who dared ask where these people came from. On those occasions when they negotiated a price, they would generally use goods worth a hundred cash to buy articles worth several thousands. In addition, they would exact gate charges and commissions. There were even cases in which people went to market with goods for sale and came home empty-handed. All this was known as “palace marketing,” but in reality it was robbery.⁸¹

舊事宮中有要市外物令官吏主之與人為市隨給其直貞元末以宦者為使抑買人物稍不如本估末年不復行文書置白望數百人於兩市并要關坊閱人所賣物但稱宮市即斂手付與真偽不復可辨無敢問所從來其論價之高下者率用百錢物買人直數千錢物仍索進奉門戶并脚價錢將物詣市至有空手而歸者名為宮市而實奪之⁸²

The increased prominence of the issue of palace marketing in the later histories, in contrast to its absence in the official histories composed prior to the 1060s, suggests that the renewed focus on the corruptions of this practice was intended by Fan Zuyu and Sima Guang to be read as an analogy critical of the State Trade system of Wang Anshi's New Policies.

In comparing the *Shunzong shi lu* (“Veritable Records of the Reign of

⁸¹ Bernard Solomon pp. 15-16

⁸² SKQS Dong ya tang chang li ji zhu, wai ji zhu 7:1

Emperor Shunzong”) and the three accounts of Tang history examined in this chapter (the *Old Tang History*, *New Tang History*, and *Tang Mirror*), the pattern is relatively consistent with that discovered in analyzing their relationship to the *Diaries of Activity and Repose*. That is, the *Old Tang History* and the *Tang Mirror* tend to replicate the accounts from the source material nearly verbatim, while the *New Tang History* tends to recount events from the official source in new words. The focus of the sources is different however. For the entire reign of Shunzong, the *Tang Mirror* selects only episodes which highlight the role of upright officials to be included in its history.

The upright officials Jia Dan 賈耽 and Zheng Xunyu 鄭珣瑜 resigned in protest of the abuse of power by Wang Shuwen. As I will discuss further in the subsequent chapter on historians' critiques, a major point of debate between the various early histories of the Tang dynasty was how to evaluate this action on the part of Jia Dan and Zheng Xunyu, in contrast to the officials Du You 杜佑 and Gao Ying 高郢, who remained in office despite the corruption of Wang Shuwen. Upon gaining authority, one of the first actions of the subsequent Emperor was to banish Shuwen and the members of his faction.

2.4 Conclusions

The only sources for Tang history extant which were composed during the Tang history itself are the *Diary of Activity and Repose for the Founding of the Tang Dynasty* and the *Veritable Records for the Reign of Emperor Shunzong*. In these records, history was viewed as a mirror of the present, rather than a

window on the past. Like a mirror it should reflect the past clearly without distortion. But also like a mirror, the viewer himself is implicated in the history which he is viewing. Above all, imperial Chinese history was intended not just to reflect the past, but to be reflected upon by those in the present.

Comparing the texts of episodes which appear in the Tang primary sources and also appear in the *Old Tang History*, the *New Tang History* and the *Tang Mirror* reveals the following trends. The *Old Tang History* is the most conservative of the texts, preserving passages from historical records most completely with the least editing. The *New Tang History* consists primarily of an editing or rewording of the events in the *Old Tang History* (or the National History on which it was based) for the early period, and on the “Veritable Records” for the later period for which no National History was written. The *Tang Mirror* includes much shorter excerpts from the primary sources than those included in the *Old Tang History* but does less editing of the passages excerpted than the *New Tang History* does. It also excerpts passages from both the Diary and the Veritable Records which were not included in the *Old Tang History*. Furthermore, passages are selected to highlight the role of upright ministers in the political arena. This focus becomes even more clear in the critiques of events included in the texts of historical criticism, the *Tang Mirror* and the *Discussions and Judgments on Tang History*.

Chapter 3: Linguistics, Historiography and the Language of *Guwen* 古文 Ancient Style Prose

The Northern Song revisions and criticisms of Tang history under consideration were written in the context of the *guwen* 古文 (“ancient style”) movement of the 11th century. The ancient style movement had its origins in the Tang dynasty with Han Yu 韓愈 (768-824). The movement really gained prominence in the 11th century when scholars were seeking a replacement for the parallel prose which was used in official writing during the Tang. During the first half of the 11th century, there were a number of Northern Song literati claiming to revive the ancient style of Han Yu, but with different interpretations of what writing in ancient style meant. They can be roughly grouped into those who emphasized unconventionality and those who emphasized concision. In 1057 Ouyang Xiu promoted the concise ancient style in the civil service examinations, which he administered that year. Su Shi, Su Che and Zeng Gong 曾鞏 (1019-1083) all received degrees in this examination, and would go on to be canonized as masters of ancient style prose alongside Han Yu and Ouyang Xiu themselves. Shortly thereafter, the *New Tang History* was published, which had been edited in ancient style prose by Ouyang Xiu and Song Qi (宋祁, 998–1061). As a result, by the second half of the 11th century the concise interpretation of ancient style had successfully displaced the unconventional interpretation.

There are both similarities and differences between Tang ancient style and the two differing interpretations of ancient style which developed in the Northern

Song period. After reviewing current scholarship on the development of the ancient style in medieval China, I will focus on the important though often overlooked role of the *New Tang History* for understanding, linguistically, the nature of the ancient style. Then I will use a syntactical analysis of the changes made in editing the *New Tang History* to argue that the grammar of 11th century ancient style prose exhibits syntactic features of more recent Chinese grammar. It does not revive the language of the classical era. Instead it appropriates ideals and rhetorical conventions of ancient texts and expresses them in a more contemporary language.

3.1 The Ancient Style Movement from Han Yu to Ouyang Xiu

Ancient style writing originated among intellectuals in the late Tang period, most notably Han Yu and Liu Zongyuan 柳宗元 (773-819). Though the poems of Chen Zi'ang 陳子昂 (d. 702), Li Bai 李白 (701-762), and Du Fu 杜甫 (712-770) were important precursors to the Tang *guwen* movement,⁸³ and Han Yu himself wrote poetry which he considered “ancient style,” it is prose writing that is most closely associated with the ancient style by Northern Song literati. Additionally, the only *shi lu* 實錄 still extant for a Tang Emperor's reign is the Shunzong shilu 順宗實錄, preserved in Han Yu's collected works and used as the basis for the accounts in the Tang histories of events which took place at the end of the 8th century and the beginning of the 9th century. Consequently Han Yu and

⁸³ See Hartman pp. 225 to 235, especially his translation of Han Yu's “Preface Seeing Off Meng Jiao” on pp. 230-232; and Qian Mu *Za lun tang dai gu wen yun dong* esp. pp. 123-5

his writing are of particular importance in understanding Northern Song ancient style in general and its use in the *New Tang History* specifically.

Han Yu's thoughts on *guwen* are stated most explicitly in his “Letter to Li Yi” 答李翊書, replying to a request for advice on literary accomplishment. I summarize his letter as follows:

Han first distinguishes between gaining literary stature among contemporaries and literary stature approaching the ancients. The latter is a gradual process. Literary accomplishment on par with the ancients is the outer manifestation of harboring the benevolent and righteous intentions of the sages. “Nourish its root and await its fruit, replenish its oil and expect its light. Roots which are nourished, their fruit follows; oil which is replenished, its light brightens. A person who is benevolent and righteous, his words are gracious.” 養其根而俟其實加其膏而希其光根之茂者其實遂膏之沃者其光曄仁義之人其言藹如也⁸⁴

Han writes that he “began learning these principles by not daring to read books which were not [those] from the Three Dynasties to the Two Han, and not daring to maintain intentions which were not [those] of the sages.”

始者非三代兩漢之書不敢觀非聖人之志不敢存

Once he grasped the sagely principles in his heart the words poured forth from his hand. The difficult task was then to examine and purify his writing to remove all cliches. When showing his writing to his contemporaries he considered their ridicule a sign of his progress. Once the pure words flowed freely he could let

⁸⁴ The text of Han's letter excerpted here and below is included in his collected works, *Dong ya tang changli ji zhu*, ju. 16 東雅堂昌黎集註/卷十六

himself go as long as he continued to “practice the path of benevolence and righteousness and immerse himself in the wellspring of the Odes and the Documents.”

行之乎仁義之途游之乎詩書之源

From this pronouncement we can extrapolate some principles of Han's ancient style: writing is secondary to moral cultivation of one's *qi* 氣, the vapor or breath from which all things are made; the *qi* is nourished by affirming the principles of benevolence and righteousness and the intentions of the sages as recorded in the books of the Han and earlier; once the writer's *qi* is abundant the words flow naturally and can be purified of the cliches of the parallel prose style; writing which aspires to the heights of the ancients is ridiculed by contemporaries.

In another letter addressing the topic of ancient style writing Han Yu emphasizes that it is the ideas of the ancients that one should imitate. Ancient style writing does not imitate the language of the ancients. The language of the ancient style should be appropriate to its subject, and it should stand out in comparison to the conventions of the time.

All of those who sit for the *jinshi* examination come naturally to the gates of those who have gone before them, who, when they see them arrive, cannot but respond to their call. So these callers are received when they arrive, and all the scholars of the city do this. Unfortunately, only I have the *reputation* of so receiving my juniors. And where reputation exists there also slander disposes.

So I answer with the truth those who come to question. If someone should ask,

“Whom is it best to take as a model for writing?”

I would have to answer respectfully,

“It is best to take the Sages and Worthies of Antiquity as a

model.”

“But in those writings of the Sages and worthies of Antiquity that survive the diction is not uniform. Whom is it best to take as a model?”

I would answer respectfully,

“Take their ideas as your model, not their diction.”

And if again someone asked,

“Should literature be easy or difficult?”

I would answer respectfully,

“Neither hard nor easy, only appropriate.”

And so it should be. I do not firmly advocate one nor prohibit the other.

No one pays attention to the hundreds of objects they see all day long. But when they see something unusual they all stare at it together and talk about it. It is the same with literature. Everyone could write at the Han court, yet Sima Xiangru, Sima Qian, Liu Xiang, and Yang Xiong stand out. Because they applied themselves intensely, the reputations they acquired were far-reaching. If they had followed the fashions of their age, they would not have established themselves, their contemporaries would not have marveled at them, and there would have been nothing passed on to later ages. There are hundreds of things in your house that you use; yet you treasure that thing which is not ordinary. The superior man's attitude toward literature is no different from this.

Now if my juniors who write literature can explore and attain this principle by taking the Sages and worthies of Antiquity as their standard, although all may not succeed, the important thing will be that if followers of Sima Xiangru, Sima Qian, Liu Xiang, and Yang Xiong do emerge, they certainly will be from this group and not from among the followers of those who pursue the ordinary.

If the Way of the Sages does not make use of literature, then literature will cease; but if it is to use literature, then we must honor those who do it well. And these are none other than those who can establish themselves and do not follow others. There have been writers ever since the beginning of writing, but those who have endured to our day are those who were able to do this. Such has always been my opinion.⁸⁵

In this letter Han Yu specifically addresses the issue of whether or not ancient style should imitate the diction of the past, and says that it should not.

But neither should it conform to the conventions of the time. Neither should it be

⁸⁵ Translation from Charles Hartman (1986) pp. 253-255; note that for the sake of consistency, Chinese words written in Wade-Giles romanization have been converted to pinyin romanization.

hard, nor easy. The emphasis on writing which is both appropriate and unconventional would form the basis of the division between the two interpretations of ancient style which emerged in the eleventh century. Writers such as Ouyang Xiu, Song Qi, and Yin Shu emphasized appropriateness and concision in ancient style prose, especially in the case of historical narrative. Writers such as Shi Jie emphasized unconventional strangeness in ancient style writing. All of these ancient style writers claim Han Yu as their predecessor. But just as Han Yu advocates following the ideas rather than the diction of the Ancients, Northern Song literati do not claim to mimic the diction of Han Yu.

These letters represent the fullest exposition of Han Yu's concept of ancient style writing. That they were amenable to differing interpretations is likely no accident. In his correspondence with his disciple Zhang Ji 張籍 766-830, a poet from Jiangnan whom Han Yu recommended for employment in 815, Zhang requests that Han Yu write a philosophical manifesto to revive the Way of Confucius, Mencius, and Yang Xiong for the people of the Tang era. Han Yu explicitly rejects the prospect of writing an ancient style manifesto to spell out his ideology. In this exchange the relevant aspect of Han Yu's ideology is his opposition to Buddhism and Daoism, which may have gotten Han Yu into trouble. However he expresses a general reluctance to commit to writing ideas that he has discussed orally. He makes a conscious choice to not produce an ancient style manifesto. He not only expresses an awareness that his thought and writing would be interpreted and understood differently by succeeding generations, he actually embraces this fact.

Zhang begins by stating that all of the ancient teachers were righteous in both word and deed, and didn't simply flatter one another. He then describes the degradation of ancient customs in their own era and how this may be rectified:

Recently I undertook to discuss with you sir, attempting to consider the abuse and decay of the customs of this generation which are not on par with the ancients of days gone by. It must be that the neglect of the way of the sages is how this has occurred. After the teaching of Confucius had subsided, Yang Zhu and Mo Di cheated and deceived with their various persuasions, interfering and misleading people's hearing. Mencius wrote his book to correct this. The way of the sages was restored and preserved in Mencius' generation. When the house of Qin eradicated learning, and the Han emphasized the arts of Huang-Lao in educating the people causing them to be submerged in confusion, Yang Xiong wrote the *Fa Yan* (Model Sayings) and disputed this. The way of the sages was still clear. Coming to the end of the Han's demise, the Buddha dharma of the western regions entered the central kingdom, and generation after generation the people of the central kingdom translated and spread it, and the arts of the Daoists likewise were passed on with renewed vigor. Of all under Heaven, there were only these two who spoke rightly.

論于執事，嘗以為世俗陵靡，不及古昔。蓋聖人之道廢弛之所為也。宣尼沒後，楊朱墨翟恢詭異說，干惑人聽，孟軻作書而正之。聖人之道復存于世。秦氏滅學，漢重以黃老之術教人，使人寢惑，揚雄作法言而辯之。聖人之道猶明。及漢衰末，西域浮屠之法入于中國，中國之人世世譯而廣之。黃老之術相沿而熾。天下之言善者惟二者而已矣。

⁸⁶

Zhang goes on to critique the heresies of recent times. He then urges Han to follow these two exemplars, Mencius and Yang Xiong, and write a book to revive the ancient Way in Tang times:

From the time Yang Xiong wrote the *Model Sayings* until today is almost one thousand years. There are none who speak the way of the sages. The only one who speaks of it is you, sir. When those habituated to customs hear it, most find it strange and do not believe, and your followers hold each other to blame. In the end no

⁸⁶SKQS Wubai jia zhu Changli wen ji, juan 14

one benefits from the teaching. You, sir, are smart, and your written compositions are like those of Mencius and Yang Xiong, you ought to write a book to uphold and preserve the way of the sages, causing the people of the current time and of later times to know how to eliminate these other teachings. How can you bow down to customs and followers of the noisily verbose? One who wishes to uphold the Way of the sages ought to follow it himself.

自揚子雲作法言至今近千載。莫有言聖人之道者。言之者惟執事焉耳。習俗者聞之，多怪而不信，徒相為訾。終無裨于教也。執事聰明，文章與孟軻楊雄相若，盍為一書以興存聖人之道，使時之人後之人知其去絕異學之所為乎。曷可俯仰于俗，囂囂為多言之徒哉？然欲舉聖人之道者其身亦宜由之也。

As evidence of Han Yu's departure from that Way, Zhang Ji cites his dalliance in *zhangju* 章句 (chapter and verse) commentary, abstract argumentation and verbal displays for fun. In conclusion, he exhorts Han to stop this and to take his place as successor to Mencius and Yang Xiong:

[I wish you would...]...inherit the work of Mencius and Yang Xiong, dispute the persuasions of Yang [Zhu], Mozi, Laozi and Buddhism, and cause the Way of the sage men to reappear in the Tang, how would this not be great? I, Ji, recognizing that one with trifling ability and dimwitted understanding dare not usurp the position of author, therefore request that you do it. If you preserve the study of chapter and verse in accordance with the times and place it alongside the flourishing and decline of that which does not decay, it is as if you lack any difference from all those who speak with no knowledge.

Salutations, Ji

[願執事...]...嗣孟軻揚雄之作，辯楊墨老釋之說，使聖人之道復見于唐，豈不尚哉？籍誠知之以材識頑鈍不敢竊居作者之位所以咨于執事而為之爾。若執事守章句之學因循于時置不朽之盛衰與。夫不知言者亦無以異矣。

籍再拜⁸⁷

Han Yu replies to Zhang's request with the following rebuttal:

When you commit something to writing, your ideas are limited by the written word. How then should you choose between

⁸⁷ Ibid.

proclaiming your ideas through word of mouth and committing them to writing? Mencius did not write the book called *Mencius*. After he died, his disciples Wan Zhang and Gongsun Chou simply recorded what Mencius had said. Now, on my own I have attained the Way of the Sages and discoursed on it, objecting to Buddhism and Daoism for many years. Those who do not know me think I like to argue. A few are persuaded but twice as many still harbor doubts. These I press even harder, but if in the end my verbal arguments cannot convince them, any writings I might have would certainly not sway them. This is why I have refrained from writing; it is not because I begrudge the effort involved. And then there is the saying, "For educating the present age, use the spoken word; for transmitting to later ages, write books."⁸⁸

夫所謂著書者義止于辭耳。宣之于口書之于簡何擇焉？孟軻之書非軻自著。軻既及其徒萬章公孫丑相與記軻所言焉耳。僕自得聖人之道而誦之排前二家有年矣。不知者以僕為好辨。也然從而化之者亦有矣。聞而疑之者又有倍焉。頑然不入者親以言諭之不入則其觀吾書也固將無所得矣。為此而止吾豈有愛于力乎哉！然有一說化當世莫若口傳來世莫若書

These letters reaffirm that for Han Yu and his disciples, the core meaning of the ancient style movement was to continue the Confucian Way in the way that Mencius and Yang Xiong had. For Han Yu, this not only didn't mean writing like Mencius and Yang Xiong, it didn't necessarily mean writing at all. Han is content to let subsequent generations record his arguments, collect his writings, and edit them as they see fit, as Confucius' and Mencius' disciples had recorded their teachers' sayings. Han Yu acknowledged the lack of authorial control over the written word, and rather than objecting to it, embraced it as the inherent means by which his words would be adapted to the understanding of later times.

This is in fact what happened, as Northern Song literati came to appreciate Han Yu and understand his ancient style in different ways. As noted at the outset of this chapter, one major difference was that Northern Song ancient style

⁸⁸ Translation from Charles Hartman (1986) pp. 161-162

consisted primarily of prose writings. Shi Jie described the following writings by Han Yu as on par with the *Yijing* 易經 (Changes) and the *Chun qiu* 春秋(Spring and Autumn Annals) of Confucius: “Li bu's [Han Yu's] 'Origin of the Way,' 'Origin of Man,' 'Origin of Slander,' 'Practicing the Difficult,' 'Questioning Yu,' 'Memorial on the Buddha Bone,' 'Discussion of Remonstrating Ministers,' since the time of the Hundred Schools there has been nothing like them. Alas! ”

吏部原道，原人，原毀，行難，禹問，佛骨表，諍臣論，自諸子以來未有也。嗚呼！

89

All of the works cited here are short form argumentative prose pieces. As we will see in the subsequent chapter on print, the earliest anthologies of ancient style writing, which appeared in the late Northern Song and during the Southern Song, were collections of short argumentative prose by Han Yu, Liu Zongyuan, Ouyang Xiu and his colleagues. Prior to this canonization of Ouyang Xiu and his colleagues as the legitimate successors to Han Yu's movement by later anthologists, there were two competing schools of Northern Song literati claiming to carry the torch of Han Yu's ancient way. In order to better understand the distinctive characteristics of the ancient style as promoted by Ouyang Xiu and his colleagues, it is helpful to examine the differences between their conception of ancient style and that of other Northern Song ancient style writers.⁹⁰

⁸⁹ 即石徂徠集卷下，雜著

⁹⁰ The following discussion follows the argument of Jin Zhongshu 金中樞 in his article “Songdai guwen yundong zhi fazhan yanjiu” 宋代古文運動之發展研究 *Xin ya xuebao*, di wu juan, di er qi, 新亞學報 第五卷第二期 pp. 80-145. For English studies of the development of the Northern Song ancient style movement, see Ronald Egan *The Literary Works of Ou-yang Hsiu (1007-72)* pp. 14-29, and Hilde deWeerd, “Canon Formation and Examination Culture: The Construction of Guwen and Daoxue

The first Northern Song literati to champion the ancient style of Han Yu was Liu Kai 劉開 (947-1000). Like every ancient style writer who came after him, he claimed to be the successor to Han Yu in Han's lineage of teachers of the Confucian Way. He writes: “My Way [is] the Way of Confucius, Mencius, Yang Xiong and Han Yu; my writing is the writing of Confucius, Mencius, Yang Xiong and Han Yu.”

吾之道孔子孟軻楊雄韓愈之道吾之文孔子孟軻楊雄韓愈之文也⁹¹

While upholding the Way and the writing of Han Yu and the great Confucian scholars of the Han dynasty and earlier, Liu Kai did not advocate writing like them in the strict sense of using archaic language. Much like Han Yu he advocated conveying the teachings of the Ancient Way in language appropriate to his own time:

“What is 'ancient style' does not lie in stodgy phrases and difficult words, making it hard for people to read and recite it. It lies in making ancient one's principles, elevating one's ideas, following the shorts and longs of language, responding to changes in writing⁹² and conducting affairs in the same way as the ancients, that is what is called 'ancient style.’”

古文者非在辭澀言苦使人難讀誦之在乎古其理高其意隨言短長應變作制同古人之行事是謂古文也⁹³

Just as in Han Yu's descriptions of *guwen*, the moral import is considered primary, and the literary style is secondary, following naturally from the didactic

Traditions.”

⁹¹ Hedong xiansheng ji juan one yingze pian (responding to responsibility) page 10

⁹² see Jin p. 84 re Confucius reference

⁹³ Hedong xiansheng ji juan one yingze pian (responding to responsibility) page 10

intent. Literary style is important, yet should be judged not by aesthetic qualities but by its ability to convey virtue. Liu Kai uses the following metaphor:

Since writing is the fish trap that contains the Way, can one be careless about how it is constructed? If it is not well made, its contents will be lost. Now, it is bad if a woman's outer appearance is more highly cultivated than her inner virtues, but not bad if her inner virtues are more highly cultivated than her appearance. Likewise, with writing it is bad if the words are more splendid than the reasoning, but not bad if the reasoning is more splendid than the words.⁹⁴

文章為道之筌也筌可忘作乎筌之不良獲斯失矣女惡容之厚於德不惡德之厚於容也文惡辭之華於理不惡理之厚於華也⁹⁵

Liu Kai was the first Song scholar to lay claim to Han Yu's lineage of Confucian transmission of the Way, but was not successful in transmitting his ancient style in his own time. It was the eccentric Mu Xiu (979-1032) who successfully promoted the works of Han Yu and Liu Zongyuan in the early Song, and whose students would go on to popularize the *guwen* movement. The *Siku tiyao* provides the following description:

Song ancient style actually began with Liu Kai and Mu Xiu. While Kai's school was limited to himself and came to an end, Xiu first transmitted it to Yin Shu, then to Ouyang Xiu. Song literary composition flourished to its highpoint due to this, so his success is not small indeed.

宋之古文實柳開與修為倡然開之學及身而止修則一傳為尹洙再傳為歐陽修而宋之文章於斯極盛則其功亦不尠矣⁹⁶

After Mu Xiu, two influential *guwen* movements claimed to be the inheritors of Han Yu's ancient style. One centered on Shi Jie and the Academy school, the other on Yin Shu and Ouyang Xiu. The latter became most influential

⁹⁴ translation Egan (1984) pp. 15-6

⁹⁵ Hedong xiansheng ji juan 5 p. 31 see also Jin p. 84

⁹⁶ siku ti yao juan 152, ji bu, bie ji lei 5 p. 49

and was used in composing the *New Tang History*. Before we turn our attention to them, though, it is worthwhile to understand the other contemporary ancient style movement which culminated in the Imperial Academy style of Shi Jie.

Shi Jie was an influential scholar at National University 太學 (*tai xue*) in the 1040s. The style cultivated by him and his students at the University came to be known as the National University style.⁹⁷ This style shared the common features of all ancient style writers: a rejection of the poetic requirements of parallel prose, and the promotion of the Way of Confucius, Mencius, Yang Xiong and Han Yu.

The distinctive feature of the National University style was that Shi Jie emphasized the unconventionality of Han Yu's writing as a criteria for ancient style writing. In Han Yu's famous *Letter to Li Yi* introduced above, Han emphasizes that he considers ridicule from his contemporaries to be a sign of progress toward the ancient style. Han Yu argues that all writing that is truly great will be unconventional in its own time and only appreciated in later eras. This turned out to be the case for Han Yu's writing.

Han Yu's penchant for the strange may have contributed to the growth of his reputation in the centuries after his death. But it was not a viable model for the Northern Song ancient style. This is because Northern Song literati were not seeking an unconventional mode of expression. They wanted to implement ancient style as a new convention for official writing in certain genres. And unlike during Han Yu's own time, in the Northern Song there was enough

⁹⁷ Jin, pp. 100-101; Egan p. 17

support for such a change to be politically viable.

In fact in the first half of the eleventh century, Song Emperors decreed on more than one occasion that parallel prose would not be the favored style of writing in the civil service examinations. Consequently the *bianti* 變體 (“unorthodox style”) taught by Shi Jie gained in popularity as an alternative. This style, which exalted the unconventional, was ill-suited to be the new convention. Candidates strove to outdo one another in eccentricity, leading to writing that was unreadable. This focus on the strange contributed to the decision to reinstate parallel prose in exams of the 1040s after the repeal of the Qingli reforms.⁹⁸

The other influential ancient style in the eleventh-century centered on Yin Shu and Ouyang Xiu. These authors reaffirmed many of Han Yu's principles of ancient style outlined above: moral understanding of the Way is the primary goal to which excellence in literature is ancillary, the Way is the Way of great Confucian scholars of the Han and earlier, and having grasped the Way one can write naturally and edit clearly. However, this school of thought did not point to the ridicule of one's contemporaries as a mark of distinction. Instead of emphasizing the unconventionality of ancient style writing, it emphasizes its concision. By emphasizing the laconic rather than the unconventional use of language, this interpretation of ancient style eventually prevailed as the dominant form of examination prose writing among subsequent generations.

Ouyang Xiu studied ancient style writing under Yin Shu and Fan

⁹⁸ See Jin, p. 101; Egan pp. 18, 25

Zhongyan, who were both students of Mu Xiu. It was Yin Shu who focused attention on concision instead of unconventionality as a criteria for ancient style prose, particularly in the case of historical narrative, which should be modeled on the laconic *Spring and Autumn Annals*. When Ouyang Xiu studied the ancient style with Yin Shu, the two of them competed in composing a dedicatory inscription. Ouyang's inscription was over a hundred characters longer than Yin Shu's, which was a brief 380 characters. Ouyang then made a second attempt, and managed to convey all of the essential details in only 360 characters, thereby winning Yin Shu's esteem.⁹⁹

In a letter of advice written in 1056 Ouyang Xiu emphasizes this aspect of what he considered to be good ancient style writing, encouraging students to keep editing to get rid of all superfluous words.¹⁰⁰:

[If you find that your writing is verbose, you should put it aside until another day and edit it, deleting the superfluous words until it becomes sharp and clean. However, do not overdo such deletion. If you overdo it, your words will not flow. You must wait until the final version comes to you naturally, as if it had been in your mind all along.¹⁰¹]

The emphasis on concision is also evident in the reaction of Song Qi to the prevalence of the unorthodox style in the exams during the Qingli reforms. In 1045 he advised that limits be set on the number of characters in each section of the exams.¹⁰²

⁹⁹ Cited in Egan (1984) p. 25 from multiple sources: Sung-pai le-ch'ao 5.3a-b, Shao-shih wen-chien lu 8.5a-b, Hsiang-shan yeh lu B.15a-b; see also Liu Liu pp. 144-5

¹⁰⁰ Translated in Ronald Egan (1984) p. 21 *ibid* 15.56 (150.7a-b)

¹⁰¹ Translated in Ronald Egan (1984) p. 21 *ibid* 15.56 (150.7a-b)

¹⁰² In Jin, p. 100 cited from Song Hui Yao *xuanju* 3 p. 4274

Just as Han Yu had advised degree candidates during his time to follow the ideas rather than the diction of the classics, Ouyang urged degree candidates to follow the ideas rather than the diction of Han Yu and Liu Zongyuan. He told Wang Anshi in 1044 “Although the writing of Han Yu and Meng Jiao is exalted, do not always imitate their style. Seek to write naturally.”¹⁰³

The focus on concise writing rather than unconventional writing made Ouyang Xiu's ancient style movement amenable to adoption as a new writing standard in a way that Shi Jie's was not. In 1057, when Ouyang served as administrator of the civil service examinations, the suitability of Ouyang's literary ideology combined with the political means to promote that ideology. He ranked highest those scholars who wrote in the ancient style prose, which ignored the strict prosodic and syntactic rules of parallelism.¹⁰⁴ He did not pass scholars who wrote in parallel prose or scholars who wrote in the unorthodox style. Although Ouyang's exam results of 1057 met with resistance and protest, the ancient style soon became officially entrenched.¹⁰⁵ When later scholars codified ancient style prose through the apparatus of anthologies of ancient style prose, it was the prominent examinees of the 1057 exams whose writings formed the core of these anthologies alongside Han Yu, Liu Zongyuan, and Ouyang Xiu himself: Zeng Gong, Su Shi, and Su Che. Besides the civil service examinations of 1057, Ouyang Xiu and Song Qi's rewriting of the Tang History was perhaps the most significant project in gaining legitimacy for their ancient style as a new convention for

¹⁰³ Translated in Ronald Egan (1984) p. 20

¹⁰⁴ See James T. C. Liu (1967), pp. 148-152 for a discussion of Ouyang's influence on the exams

¹⁰⁵ Peter Bol (2008), p. 55

official writing.

3.2 Syntax and the Language of the New Tang History

The preceding description of the Tang and Northern Song ancient style movements serves as the context for my analysis of Northern Song historical prose. In promoting their concise prose style, how do the Song editors make grammatical changes to the language? Does the syntax of the “ancient style” prose really replicate the language of the Zhou and Han periods? And do the Song editors treat the writings of Han Yu differently than they treat the sources from the high Tang period?

With respect to the first question, scholars have long debated the nature of the relationship between the syntax of the language of the classics and that of the ancient style writings of Han Yu and Ouyang Xiu. James C. T. Liu has described Han Yu's writing as a mix of archaic and colloquial which “afforded maximum scope to individual expression, absorption of current vocabulary, and development of new syntax.”¹⁰⁶

Likewise Charles Hartman has also described this style primarily through an absence of metrical restrictions:

Han Yu's frequent use of colloquial elements accounts for much of the vivaciousness of his style. Fundamental was his abandonment of the artificial six/four periods of parallel prose for the irregular periods of [*guwen*]. This move freed him to mold his periods and rhythms more closely to the patterns of spoken speech.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁶ James T. C. Liu (1967) p. 142

¹⁰⁷ Charles Hartman (1986) p. 251

And yet, Hartman goes on to say, “No matter how much colloquial vocabulary and rhythm Han Yu's style absorbed, his is still a literary Chinese style based mainly on memorized texts, not on spoken speech.”¹⁰⁸

More recently, Dieter Khun has proposed that ancient style syntax is not a new syntax, but the old syntax, which is a unifying feature of ancient style language:

The ancient prose style had originated in Zhou and Han times long before alien Buddhist thought infiltrated Chinese learning. By intentionally modeling their own texts on these illustrious ancient examples and by returning to an authentic Chinese literary style that combined theory and practice, form and content, they hoped to bring the underlying values of Confucianism to their deliberations as scholar-officials. The syntax had to be studied and cultivated for years before an author was able to produce an excellent essay that met the expectations of the *jìnshì* examiners.¹⁰⁹

These and other scholars point to syntax as a defining feature of the ancient style, but they do not proffer any syntactic evidence or syntactic features that characterize the ancient style.

More specific linguistic studies of Han Yu's prose have been conducted by Tsu-lin Mei and Guo Xiliang. Mei notes the following Tang era grammatical usages in Han Yu's prose which differ from Han and earlier usage: the form of disjunctive questions, the use of the pronoun *qi* 其, the use of the passive construction with *jian* 見, the use of *lai* 來 to indicate “time since”, and the use of verbal measure words.¹¹⁰ Guo points out these vernacular features of Han Yu's prose: a high frequency of disyllabic words characteristic of post-Han prosody,

¹⁰⁸ Charles Hartman (1986) p. 252

¹⁰⁹ Dieter Khun (2009) p. 131

¹¹⁰ Mei (1973) pp. 31-33

placement of pronoun objects after the verb in negated sentences characteristic of post-Han syntax, the placement of locative phrases before the verb (also a feature of post-Han syntax), and the use of the pronoun *qi* 其 as an object (also noted by Mei).

The *New Tang History* is an excellent resource for attempting to answer these questions. As seen in other chapters, there are points on which the *Old Tang History* and the *New Tang History* differ substantially in their content. These differences can reveal historical and political debates of concern to the historians who wrote them. At many points, however, the two histories narrate the same events in a very similar way. Where the semantic content of the two are nearly identical, examining grammatical differences between them can reveal changes that are purely syntactic. Points where the *New Tang History* changes the syntax of the *Old Tang History* without changing the narrative content presumably represent the syntax of the ancient style according to Yin Shu, Ouyang Xiu and Song Qi.

Methodology

In this study, syntax is understood in terms of X-bar theory as developed by Noam Chomsky and Ray Jackendoff beginning in the 1970s. My own understanding of the application of X-bar theory is primarily based on the *The Syntax of Natural Language: an Online Introduction Using the Trees Program* by Beatrice Santorini and Anthony Kroch.¹¹¹

The basic assumptions of X-bar theory is that each syntactical unit of

¹¹¹ Beatrice Santorini and Anthony Kroch. 2007-.

language consists of an X-0 level projection, an X-bar projection (intermediate projection), and an XP (phrase level) projection. The X-0 level projection is occupied by the lexical or morphological unit, and the intermediate and phrasal levels are binary branching nodes at which the elementary tree for the lexical or morphological unit can combine with other syntactic trees to form phrases and sentences. The syntactic structure of sentences are constructed according to three types of operations: substitution, in which the XP node is substituted into the XP position on another tree, adjunction, in which the X-bar node is duplicated in order for a modifier to attach to the spine, and movement, in which X-0 level items move to occupy vacant specifier positions. The way in which each of these operations apply varies from language to language. However, the existence of these three operations, and the fundamental nature of syntactic trees to be at most binary branching at each node, are assumed to be features of a common universal grammar.¹¹²

The methodology used here to investigate syntactic change begins by locating passages in the *Old Tang History* and the *New Tang History* that contain very similar content and then comparing the two versions in search of any patterns of grammatical change. The biographies of the courtier and historian Chu Suiliang 褚遂良 can serve as an illustration of this approach. In investigating these syntactic changes, this biography, along with those of Yao Chong, Song Jing, and others, form a very useful corpus because of the close correspondence between the biographies in the *Old Tang History* and the *New*

¹¹² See Santorini and Kroch (2007) chapters 1-4

Tang History.

The attached Table 3.1:Biographies of Chu Suiliang illustrates how the events and sequence in the two biographies are very similar to each other, but the language is noticeably changed in the *New Tang History*. Aligning the two versions of events alongside one another, as in Table 3.1, helps to reveal patterns of change in the language.

The most obvious pattern revealed in these comparisons is that throughout the *New Tang History*, there is a tendency towards conciseness. When the *New Tang History* and the *Old Tang History* present the same information, the *New Tang History* often deletes words or phrases from the *Old Tang History* in a manner which preserves the meaning of the earlier account but conveys it in fewer characters. This is not surprising in light of the anecdotal evidence cited above regarding the high value which Yin Shu, Ouyang Xiu and Song Qi placed on brevity.

In many cases the *New Tang History* deletes words or phrases that modify or repeat the main content of the sentence. These changes may well be semantically motivated by a desire to eliminate details which the editors considered unnecessary. In other cases, deleted characters are syntactic function words. In these cases, the editing of the text may represent a change in the syntactic system of the language. Patterns of change to certain syntactic function words will reflect grammatical changes between the *Old Tang History* and the *New Tang History*. The investigation of the relationship between the ancient style language of the *New Tang History* and the history of Chinese syntax thus

involves two step. First, grammatical changes between the language of the *Old Tang History* and the *New Tang History* have to be identified. Then these syntactic differences can be compared with known changes in the history of Chinese syntax, to see which is older. This will show whether the syntax of the *New Tang History* recreates the syntax of the classical language of the Han and earlier, or reflects the syntax of the language of the eleventh-century.

Patterns of change in the *New Tang History*

In comparing related passages from the *Old Tang History* and the *New Tang History*, there is evidence for syntactic differences involving the following: the pronoun 之 *zhi*, the complementizer or relative pronoun 者 *zhe*, and the preposition 於/于 *yu*. Of these, the preposition *yu* proved to be the best barometer for measuring syntactic change.

In the comparison corpus, the character 之 is one of the most frequently used, as well as one of the most frequently deleted. However, it is sometimes retained in the *New Tang History* and it is sometimes deleted, with no discernible pattern. The word 之 has two different functions in Middle Chinese. One is an object pronoun, the other is a genitive marker. The first function is no longer productive in modern spoken Mandarin although it persists in formal writing; the second function has been replaced by 的 and 以, but is retained in certain set phrases such as 之間, 之前, etc. In the *New Tang History*, in some cases *zhi* is deleted as an object, in other cases it is deleted as a genitive. Drawing examples from Table 3.1, where the *Old Tang History* writes 詔罷封禪之事 “proclaimed the cancellation of the activities of the *feng* and *shan*,” the *New*

Tang History writes 詔罷封禪 “proclaimed the cancellation of *feng* and *shan*.” In this example, the genitive phrase 之事 “the matter of,” is deleted. Conversely, a few lines later, the *Old Tang History* writes 劉洎曰設令遂良不記天下亦記之矣 “Liu Ji said, 'If you order Suiliang not to record it, All Under Heaven will surely record it.’” The *New Tang History* adds the genitive phrase 之人 to this sentence: 劉洎曰使 遂良不記天下之人亦記之矣 “Liu Ji said, 'If Suiliang does not record it, the people of All-Under Heaven will surely record it.’”

The above examples show that the genitive use of *zhi* is deleted from the *New Tang History* in some cases, and is added to the *New Tang History* in others, with no pattern discernible. Similarly in its usage as an object pronoun, it is deleted in some cases and added in others. Although there is noticeable variation in the use of *zhi* it does not seem to exhibit any consistent pattern, although further research may reveal one. Given the Song editors' penchant for eliminating extraneous characters, it is not surprising that pronouns would be deleted, since pronouns are redundant by nature and do not introduce any new semantic material.

The complementizer *zhe* is the second feature which seems to be involved in syntactic changes from the *Old Tang History* to the *New Tang History*. Unfortunately, it does not appear frequently enough to construct a clear argument. It seems that the phrases headed by *zhe* in the *New Tang History* may be shorter and more restricted than those in the *Old Tang History*. For example, in Chu Suiliang's biography, the *Old Tang History* writes 諫舜禹者十餘人 “those who criticized Shun and Yu, more than ten people,” the *New Tang History* writes

諫者十餘 “critics, more than ten.” But again, this may be the result of the Song editors' pursuit of concision rather than any grammatical features.

The third apparent grammatical change, which turns out to be the most useful in understanding the syntax of Song ancient style prose, involves the word(s) 於 and 于. They do not appear as frequently as the pronoun 之; however, they do appear very often and are more consistently deleted from the text of the *New Tang History*. Furthermore, the pattern of change is much more apparent than that for *zhi* or *zhe*. Based on a corpus of semantically similar passages from the *Old Tang History* and the *New Tang History*, there is a clear decline in the use of *yu*, from 198 in the *Old Tang History* to 81 in the *New Tang History*. The attached Table 3.2, “Uses of *yu* in Selected Biographies from the *Old Tang History* and the *New Tang History*” shows the numerical decline in the instances of *yu* in passages that relay the same narrative content.

The preposition *yu* and the history of Chinese syntax

The grammatical changes in usage of *yu* are a good indication of historical change in the syntax of Chinese for three reasons. First, it occurs frequently enough in the *Old Tang History* and is changed frequently enough in the *New Tang History* to constitute a significant pattern of change. Secondly, the history of *yu* in Chinese has been extensively studied, and is known to have undergone specific and significant changes from the Zhou period to the Han period. Thirdly, these change are related to the larger syntactical change of prepositional phrases in Chinese moving from after the verb phrase to before the verb phrase.

In his *Outline of Classical Chinese Grammar*, Pulleyblank gives the

following uses of *yu*: comparative degree,¹¹³ the agent of a passive verb,¹¹⁴ introducing the indirect object,¹¹⁵ and to introduce a locative phrase.¹¹⁶ However, he does not give a diachronic analysis of these uses. The history of *yu* has been the subject of recent historical linguistics studies by Tsulin Mei, Guo Xiliang, and He Leshi.¹¹⁷ As a result, we know that the use of the preposition *yu* developed from the verbal uses of the word beginning in the language of the oracle bones. Prepositional usage flourished in the Warring States period, and was in decline from the Han period onwards.

Certain points of contention remain among these scholars, particularly with respect to the origin of preposition *yu* from the verb *yu* in the oracle bones and early bronze inscriptions. However, the consensus is that its use declined beginning in the Han. The decline in usage of the preposition *yu* in the prose of the *New Tang History* therefore suggests that the “ancient prose” of the Song was syntactically less similar to the language of the pre-Qin classics than it was to the syntax of more recent Chinese.

It is also worth mentioning here that there was a shift in the dominant written form of the word *yu* from 于 to 於 sometime around the Warring States

¹¹³ Pulleyblank, *An Outline of Classical Chinese Grammar* p. 24 #34

¹¹⁴ Ibid., p. 28 #52, p. 36 #92

¹¹⁵ Ibid., p. 32 #74-75

¹¹⁶ Ibid. p. 32 #74, p. 33 #77, p. 53

¹¹⁷ See Tsulin Mei, *Jieci “yu” zai jiaguwen he han-zang yu li de qi yuan* (The Preposition “Yu” and its Origins in Sino-Tibetan”) *Zhong guo yu wen* 2004 no. 4 and Shi Bing, *Ye lun jieci “yu” de qi yuan he fa zhan* (Further Discussion of the Origin and Development of the Preposition “Yu”) *Zhong guo yu wen* 2003 no. 4; for Guo's response see his *Han yu jieci “yu” qi yuan yu Han-Zang yu shuo shi que* (Deliberations on the Theory of the Sino-Tibetan Origins of the Chinese Preposition “Yu”) in *Zhong guo yu wen* 2005 no. 4; see also He Leshi *Hanyu jufa jiegoushang de yi ge zhong da bianhua – cong “Zuo zhuan,” “Shiji” de bijiao kan jiebing duanyu weizhi de qian yi* “An Important Change in Chinese Syntax: Fronting of the Position of Prepositional Phrases Based on a Comparison of the *Zuo zhuan* and the *Shiji*” in He (2000) pp. 170-188; and *Gu hanyu de jieci xi tong* “The system of prepositions in Old Chinese” in He (2000) pp. 130-150

period. Some scholars have proposed semantic or dialect differences between the two, most notably Karlgren in his study of the *Zuo zhuan*. Current consensus is that they represent an earlier and later pronunciation and written form of the same semantic and syntactic functions.¹¹⁸ In my data I have preserved the distinction between the two written forms, but I found no grammatical difference in usage. Thus I use *yu* to indicate either written form.¹¹⁹

Guo Xiliang 郭錫良 has presented the most extensive diachronic analysis of the preposition *yu*. His article *Jie ci “yu” de qi yuan he fa zhan* 介词“于”的起源和发展 (“The origin and Development of the Preposition 'Yu'”) traces the grammar and usage of the preposition *yu* from the earliest oracle bone inscriptions, through a period of wide usage in the Warring States period, and subsequent replacement, primarily by *zai* 在, beginning after the Han.¹²⁰ This article provoked some debate with respect to the verbal origins of the preposition in oracle bone inscriptions and its possible Sino-Tibetan roots.¹²¹ However, it is not the origins of the word but the historical development of the preposition from the Warring States to the Tang that is most relevant to the study of ancient style prose, since the models for ancient style prose were the Confucian classics and the early Han authors, not oracle bones or bronze inscriptions.

¹¹⁸ He Leshi 1992, pp. 137-138; Guo (2005) pp. 226-7

¹¹⁹ Guo (2005) p. 227

¹²⁰ GUO Xiliang, reprinted in *Han yu shi lun ji* (Collected Discussions on the History of the Chinese Language), pp. 217-232. (Originally presented at the 2nd International Conference on the grammar of ancient Chinese, Beijing 8/19/1996 and published in *Zhong guo yu wen* 1997 no. 2.

¹²¹ See Tsu-lin Mei *Jieci “yu” zai jiaguwen he han-zang yu li de qi yuan* (The Preposition “Yu” and its Origins in Sino-Tibetan”) *Zhong guo yu wen* 2004 no. 4 and SHI Bing, *Ye lun jieci “yu” de qi yuan he fa zhan* (Further Discussion of the Origin and Development of the Preposition “Yu”) *Zhong guo yu wen* 2003 no. 4; for Guo's response see his *Han yu jieci “yu” qi yuan yu Han-Zang yu shuo shi que* (Deliberations on the Theory of the Sino-Tibetan Origins of the Chinese Preposition “Yu”) in *Zhong guo yu wen* 2005 no. 4

According to Guo's chronology, outlined below, *yu* was grammaticalized from a verb to a preposition before the Warring States period. During the Warring States period it was used productively to introduce locations, times or recipients. After the Han dynasty, it was replaced by other prepositions, primarily *zai*. Both Guo and He demonstrate a connection between this replacement and the syntactic shift from VP + PP to PP + VP in the history of Chinese.

According to Guo, the word *yu* 于 was used as both a verb and as a preposition in the oracle bones. When *yu* comes after a noun it is usually used as a verb, whereas when used either after a verb, or used with an object other than a place noun, it is being used as a preposition.¹²² Based on the text of the *Jia gu wen mo shi zong ji* 甲骨文摹释总集 Guo gives six sentence patterns for *yu* being used as a verb; in all six types *yu* means “to go to.” It is almost always followed by a noun phrase indicating a location.¹²³

Besides these verbal uses, he also finds *yu* used as a preposition in this same corpus of oracle bone inscriptions. He gives four sentence patterns of *yu* being used as a preposition. The first is to introduce a location in which an action took place. The second is phrases indicating time. The third is to indicate the recipient or indirect object of a verb. The fourth is the agent of a passive verb. Those phrases which indicate time or indirect object could appear either before or after the verb, but those indicating place or agent usually occur after the verb

¹²² Guo p. 334

¹²³ Guo (2005) pp. 218-220

phrase.¹²⁴

According to Guo, of 5,000 usable tokens of *yu* in the collection *Yinxu jiaguwen ke ci mo shi zong ji* 殷墟甲骨文刻辞摹释总集 5% are used as verbs, 18% are used as prepositions introducing a location, 9% are used as a preposition introducing a time, and 68% are used as a preposition indicating the indirect object of a sacrifice or offering.¹²⁵ This shows that from its earliest usage, introducing indirect objects was one of the primary purposes of the preposition *yu*.

Moving from the language of the oracle bones to the language of Western Zhou bronze inscriptions, the verbal use of *yu* decreases and the prepositional uses of *yu* proliferate. Based on the text contained in the *Shang Zhou qingtong qi mingwen xuan* 商周青铜器铭文选, Guo finds that less than 1% of uses are verbal. With regard to prepositional usage of *yu* in these bronze inscriptions, he finds that the object of a prepositional phrase headed by *yu* could be an abstract noun phrase or an adjective. It wasn't used only for time, location or recipients. Furthermore, whereas in the oracle bone inscriptions the use of *yu* to introduce the indirect object was limited to the recipient of a sacrifice or offering, in the bronze inscriptions it is used to introduce a much broader range of indirect object, which are recipients of a much broader range of actions. In this corpus, out of 511 texts used from the collection of bronze inscriptions, Guo finds 324 usable tokens. Three are used as a verb; of the 321 prepositional uses, 256 of the phrases headed by *yu* appear after the verb (80%). 174 of the 321 prepositional

¹²⁴ Guo (2005) pp. 220-223

¹²⁵ Guo (2005) p. 223

phrases are used to introduce location (54%); 132 indicate the recipient of an action (41%). Of these latter tokens where the *yu* phrase indicates the indirect object, only 6 are the recipients of sacrifices or offerings. 14 of the 15 remaining *yu* prepositions indicate the appropriate scope of an action, and only one is used to introduce the time of the action.¹²⁶

Moving from the Western Zhou to the Warring States period, *yu* is primarily used as a preposition; verbal uses of *yu* in the pre-Qin classics are rare and mostly found in the *Shi jing*. Guo finds three other significant changes in the use of *yu* during the Warring States. One: the preposition *yu* can take a wide array of words and phrases as its object. Two: it is used in comparisons, such as 大於 *dayu* “bigger than.” Three: it grammaticalizes in set phrases such as 至于 and 于是, which continue to be used as lexical items today. The corpus used by Guo for this time period consists of the received texts of the *Shi jing* 詩經, *Lun yu* 論語, *Meng zi* 孟子 and *Han Fei zi* 韓非子, and the excavated texts *Bao shan chu jian* 包山楚簡 and *Zhan guo zong heng jia shu* 戰國縱橫家書¹²⁷ It was also during this period that variant written forms of *yu* appeared.

From this data, it is clear that the primary functions of *yu* in the language from the Zhou to the Warring States were to indicate location and to indicate the indirect object of a verb. Other uses, such as in comparisons or to indicate time, are used much less frequently. The use of *yu* to indicate locations and to indicate indirect objects are two related but separate syntactic functions. The data from the Tang histories will show that these two functions develop differently in the

¹²⁶ Guo (2005) pp. 223-225

¹²⁷ Guo (2005) pp. 226-229

history of Chinese. I will argue that the locative function began to disappear earlier than the function of *yu* to indicate the recipient, or indirect object.

Guo concludes his chronology by showing how, statistically, the use of *yu* to indicate location is surpassed by the use of *zai* during the Han and Six Dynasties. This is connected to a larger shift in Chinese syntax from post-verbal prepositional phrases (VP-PP e.g., V *yu* place) to pre-verbal prepositional phrases (PP-VP e.g., *zai* place V). Guo's analysis is persuasive with respect to the locative function of *yu*. The replacement of VP + PP structures with *yu* by PP + VP structures with *zai* explains the disappearance of *yu* in locative constructions.¹²⁸ However, this does not address the use of *yu* with an indirect object, which he dismisses as a type of locative phrase with the recipient being an abstract location.¹²⁹ As noted above though, according to Guo's own chronology, introducing the indirect object was one of the most frequent uses of preposition *yu* from its earliest appearance through the Warring States.

After considering the research of He Leshi on the shift from VP + PP to PP + VP, I will propose an alternative analysis, based on the Phrase Structure Condition, which I believe is better able to account for differences in locative uses and dative uses of *yu* phrases.

The surface pattern of change in Chinese syntax from VP + PP to PP + VP is the topic of He Leshi's research in historical syntax. He provides an extremely valuable analysis of the development of *yu* as part of this larger analysis of the

¹²⁸ Guo (2005) pp. 229-230

¹²⁹ Guo suggests that both the use with indirect objects and the use with agents are conceptually locative phrases, see Guo (2005) pp. 222-223

development of prepositional phrases in Chinese more generally. This analysis is based on the comparison of the *Zuo zhuan* and the *Shiji*. It is therefore especially relevant to my research, since the *Zuo zhuan* and *Shi ji* would have served as the primary examples of historiography for the Tang and Song historians. As with Guo's argument, He's analysis focuses on the disappearance of *yu* in locative phrases, but pays less attention to the use of *yu* in the double object construction.

He's article, "An Important Change in Chinese Syntax: Fronting of the Position of Prepositional Phrases Based on a Comparison of the *Zuozhuan* and the *Shiji*,"¹³⁰ studies a variety of prepositional phrases including, but not limited to, *yu*. As the title suggests, the focus of the article is on the movement of prepositional phrases from after the verb in the older form of the language to before the verb, as in Mandarin today.¹³¹ The period from the composition of the *Zuozhuan* to the composition of the *Shiji* marks the pivotal turning point in the shift from VP + PP to PP + VP in Chinese, He argues.¹³²

Focusing on the development of the prepositional phrase as a syntactic unit rather than focusing on the development of certain lexical items, such as *yu*, is a good potential approach to studying the history of Chinese syntax. However, in this case, He's own data suggests that the prepositional phrases under consideration do not all behave the same syntactically. It is not necessarily that the same prepositional phrases are moving from after the VP in the Warring States period to before the VP in the Han period. Rather, the prepositions that

¹³⁰ He Leshi (2000) pp. 170-188; this is a revised edition of an article which was originally published in *yuyan yanjiu* 1985 no. 1

¹³¹ He Leshi (2000) pp. 170-171

¹³² *Ibid.* p. 171

appear after the VP in the Warring States period become less frequent in the Han, and new prepositions appear before the VP in the Han. He finds that there are 14 prepositions in the *Zuozhuan* that usually appear before the VP, and an additional 22 new prepositions besides these 14 in the *Shiji* that usually appear before the verb. In both texts, however, *yu* is one of only three prepositions which usually appears after the verb¹³³. This suggests that the preposition *yu* is syntactically distinct and is worthy of independent consideration.

He's statistical analysis shows that 63% of prepositional phrases are after VP in the *Zuozhuan*, but only 24.7% of prepositional phrases are after VP in the *Shiji*.¹³⁴ This change is largely due to the disappearance of *yu*, which comprises 58% of the total number of prepositions in the *Zuozhuan* but only 27% in the *Shiji*.

He's data, like Guo's data, show that VP + PP with the preposition *yu* was much more frequent in the pre-Qin language than it was in the Han and later. According to He's Chart 2 “*Zuo, Shi jiebing duanyu chuxian cixu duizhao biao*” (Chart Comparing the Frequency of Occurrences of Prepositional Phrases in the *Zuo zhuan* and the *Shi ji*), 於 occurs 230 times before VP and 1534 times after VP in *Zuo zhuan*, whereas it occurs 105 times before the VP but only 417 times after VP in *Shi ji*. 于 doesn't occur before VP in either text, but it occurs 1442 times after VP in *Zuo zhuan* and only 8 times in *Shi ji*.¹³⁵

Based on the research of Guo and He, there is clearly a decrease in the use

¹³³ He (2000) pp. 171-184; the other two post-verbal pronouns, *hu* and *zhu* are also closely related to *yu*. However, these other two are very rare in the texts under consideration in this dissertation.

¹³⁴ He (2000) p. 179

¹³⁵ He (2000) p. 180 Chart 2

of *yu* from the Warring States period to the Han period. The use of preposition *yu* in phrases after the verb phrases represents an older form of syntax. And the decrease in use of *yu* specifically, and of prepositional phrases after the verb phrase more generally, represent the syntax of the Han and later. This feature can therefore serve as an indication of whether the syntax of the *New Tang History* is edited to be more like the earlier or the later syntactic pattern.

The use of *yu* in the *Old Tang History* and in the *New Tang History*

The attached Table 3.2, “Chart Comparing Uses of *yu* in Selected Biographies from the *Old Tang History* and the *New Tang History*,” compares the number of occurrences of the preposition, in either its earlier form 於 or its later form 于, in the *Old Tang History* and the *New Tang History*. In order to reduce the effects of changes in content, only those biographies or excerpts that relate the same historical content were used in the comparison.

The results suggest that the ancient style prose of the *New Tang History* in fact reflects a more modern syntax in which the VP + PP structure is disappearing, rather than a revival of Warring States period syntax, in which this structure was productive. The use of prepositional phrases headed by *yu* in my data set declines from 198 in the *Old Tang History* text to only 81 in the *New Tang History* text (Table 3.2). Proportionately there is a relative increase in the older form 于 relative to the more widely used form 於, but overall there is a significant decline in use. In addition there is a shift from approximately 85% of *yu* phrases after the VP in the *Old Tang History* to approximately 70% in the *New Tang History*. This suggests that the older character was preferred by the

Song ancient style writers, but the newer syntax was in use in their prose.

This kind of numerical analysis is helpful in understanding the large scale trends taking place in the language. And it shows that the *New Tang History* prose was moving away from classical syntax towards modern syntax. However, some questions remain. If *yu* was becoming obsolete and the language was changing from VP + PP to PP + VP already in the Han dynasty, why is *yu* still appearing after the verb at all in the 11th century? A closer look at the specific contexts in which the use of *yu* changes in the *New Tang History*, combined with recent studies on the verb phrase in Chinese using X-bar theory, suggests a better explanation of the syntactic change taking place from the Tang to the Song.

From quantitative analysis to qualitative analysis

To get a clearer picture of the mechanisms behind this syntactical change, it is helpful to look at specific examples of how the same historical content is conveyed in syntactically different ways. This kind of qualitative comparison is not possible with the wide range of materials used by Guo in his research. However it is an important part of the analysis in He's argument on the changes between the *Zuo zhuan* and the *Shi ji*, as well as an important part of the analysis in this dissertation of the changes between the *Old Tang History* and the *New Tang History*.

By looking at chapters from the *Shiji* which narrate the events of the Spring and Autumn period alongside the narratives of the same events in the *Zuozhuan*, He is able to make qualitative conclusions about how the use of *yu* changes, beyond the fact of a significant decrease in usage. Specifically, the

following four: in many cases of locative usage, the location still follows the verb, but the *yu* is deleted so that the location directly follows the verb (He's 3.2.1), in a few of the cases where *yu* introduces the indirect object, the *yu* is deleted and the indirect object is the immediate object of the verb (He's 3.2.2), some prepositional phrases move from after the verb to before the verb, in which case they may use *yu* before the verb or they may replace it with a different preposition (He's 3.2.3), and by and large the older written form 于 is replaced by 於 (He's 3.2.4).¹³⁶

He's data show that, in editing ancient Chinese during the Han, Sima Qian did not actually move the prepositional phrases with *yu* to before the VP and replace *yu* with *zai* very often. Much more frequently, he reanalyzed the object of the preposition *yu* to be the direct object of the verb phrase and deleted *yu*. This suggests that perhaps there is a better explanation for the decrease in the use of *yu* than the theory that it was eclipsed by the use of *zai* before the VP.

A similarly qualitative approach can be applied to the data from the *Old Tang History* and the *New Tang History*. Doing so yields similar results. When the same semantic content is retained in the *New Tang History* but expressed with different syntax, it is most often the case that the noun phrase which is the object of *yu* in the *Old Tang History* is reanalyzed as the object of the VP in the *New Tang History* and the preposition *yu* is deleted. Very rarely is *yu* replaced by *zai*.

My data also show that *yu* continued to be productive as late as the 11th

¹³⁶ He (2000) pp. 182-185

century in some contexts. The overall decline in use of *yu* did not result simply from the deletion or replacement of *yu*. In fact, *yu* is deleted much more often than the numbers suggest. This is because there are many cases in which *yu* is added in the *New Tang History* where it was not used in the *Old Tang History*. By looking at the patterns in the deletion of *yu* in contrast with the patterns of the addition of *yu*, more can be learned about the grammatical change taking place than from the overall statistical decline in usage alone.

The Phrase Structure Condition

My data suggest that the use of *yu* to indicate location and the use of *yu* to indicate indirect object underwent different changes in the history of Chinese syntax. The use of *yu* to indicate location decreased. However, the decrease was largely due to reanalysis of the object of *yu* as the object of the VP, rather than as part of a post-verbal prepositional phrase. At the same time, however, *yu* continued to be used in the Tang and Song periods to indicate indirect objects when the direct object was not expressed.

These two seemingly contradictory patterns lead to the following conclusions. The syntactic rule in play here is more complicated than a surface change from VP + PP to PP + VP. If that were the grammatical change taking place, then it should apply to both uses of the prepositional phrases. And, having begun in the Han, it would have gone to completion well before the Song, so that there would not be any new PPs appearing after VP at all. Therefore, whatever the underlying syntactical rule is, it must treat the locative function of *yu* phrases and the indirect object of *yu* phrases differently. The Phrase Structure Condition

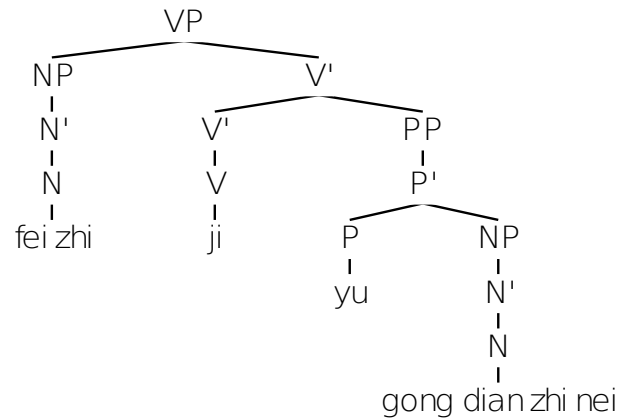
of modern Mandarin satisfies these requirements and explains the differences in surface strings produced with *yu*. This shows that the syntax of the *New Tang History* is clearly more recent, rather than more ancient, than that of the *Old Tang History*.

The Phrase Structure Condition (PSC) was first identified by James C.T. Huang and defined as follows: “Within a given sentence in Chinese, the head (the V or VP) may branch to the left only once, and only at the lowest level of expansion.”¹³⁷ I will show that the changes made by the ancient style editors function to save the sentences from the PSC. The differences in whether prepositional phrases with *yu* after the VP are grammatical or not depends on whether they are modifiers or objects. Prepositional phrases which function as modifiers of the verb phrase attach to the syntactic spine by adjunction at the V-bar node. This results in a phrase structure that branches to the left twice, at V-bar and at V⁰. This violates the PSC, and for this reason phrases which express location are not allowed. On the other hand, prepositional phrases which express the indirect object can be analyzed as complements of the VP itself, and therefore do not cause the VP to branch to the left more than once. For this reason, some *yu* phrases are allowed to appear after the VP, since they do not violate the PSC.

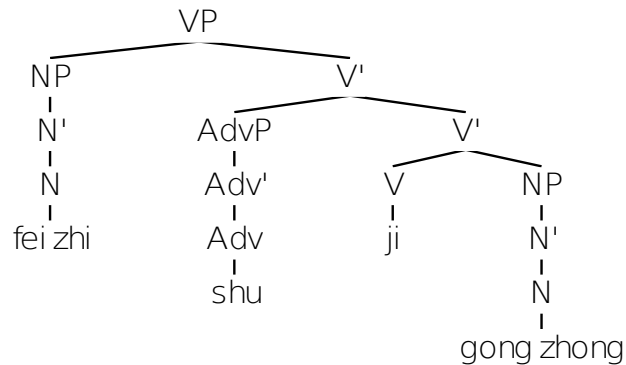
Looking at examples where *yu* is deleted from the *New Tang History* text, in contrast to examples where it is added to it, will illustrate this theory. The biography of Chu Suiliang records a discussion between Emperor Taizong and his advisers on the auspice of a flock of pheasants congregating in the palace. The

¹³⁷ Huang (1984) p. 53; see Cheng p. 153 3a-b for a tree diagram of the PSC

Old Tang History describes the situation as 飛雉集於宮殿之內 “Pheasants gathered in the interior of the palace.”



In the *New Tang History*, the prepositional phrase is replaced with a locative noun phrase, which is then treated as the object of the verb.

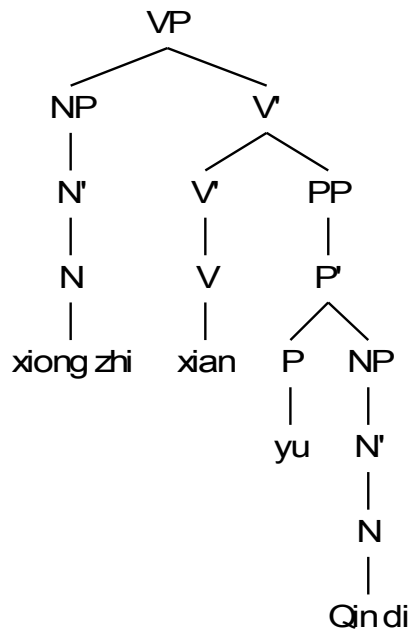


“Flying pheasants repeatedly assembled within the palace.”

The same idea is expressed in a phrase that does not violate the PSC.

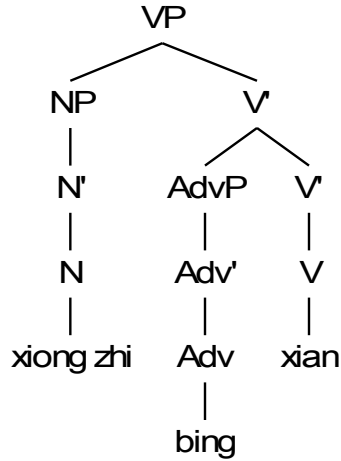
At the end of his prognostication in the *Old Tang History*, Chu Suiliang says: 雄雉見於秦地. “The male pheasants appear on Qin ground.” In this sentence, the verb “appear” is intransitive, so it cannot take an object. The

locative phrase “on Qin ground” must therefore modify the verb phrase at V-bar level, as illustrated below. As the diagram shows, this violates the PSC, because the VP spine branches to the left at an intermediate node, rather than at the lowest level of expansion.



In the *New Tang History*, this phrase is rendered as follows:

雄雌並見 The male and female [sparrows] appear together. In this VP, the adverb modifier *bing* ('together') adjoins to V-bar on the left, and so does not violate the PSC.



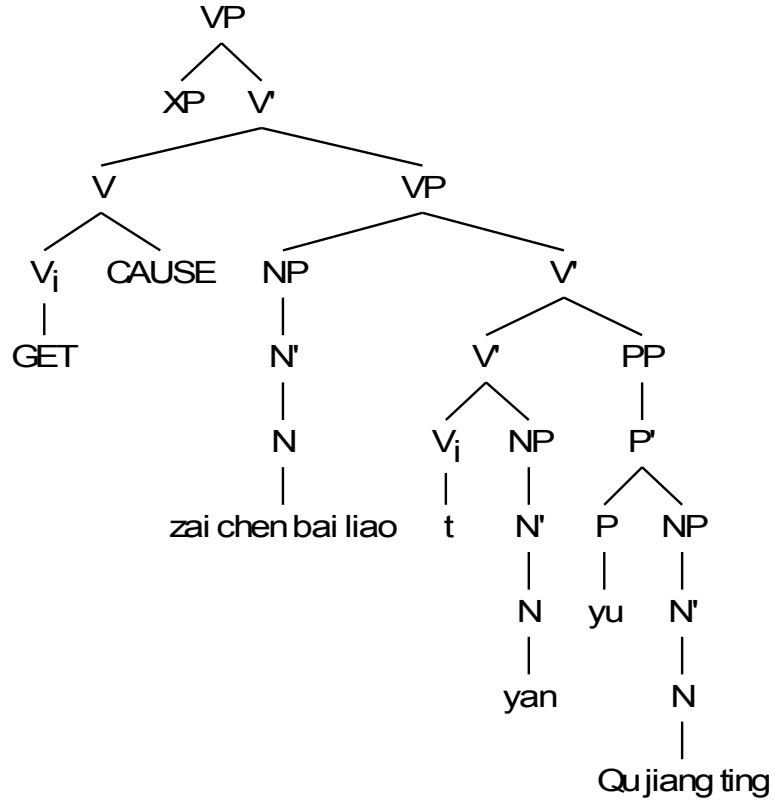
The above examples from the biographies of Chu Suiliang show two strategies used by the *New Tang History* in editing locative phrases. In some cases, the locative phrase is deleted, in other cases where the locative usage in the *Old Tang History* violates the PSC, the location NP is made the direct object of the VP itself. Either change conforms the sentence to the PSC.

The following example from the biography of Zhang Jianfeng involves both a locative prepositional phrase with *yu* and a double object construction. In editing the text, the *New Tang History* changes both of these features. Although the following example uses *yu* as a locative modifier, other examples to be considered below involve *yu* phrases used in double object constructions, so this example is a good transition from the topic of locative phrase structures to indirect object phrase structures in the double object construction.

The double object construction has been analyzed in modern syntax using VP shells. Because syntax is fundamentally a binary branching structure, verbs which semantically require two objects, such as “give,” have a semantic-syntactic

mismatch. The logical structure of the verb give is: agent GIVE recipient theme. However, a VP can take only one NP as its complement. Based on cross-linguistic research, the verb “give” is understood to involve one VP that takes a second VP as its complement. So the underlying structure is: agent CAUSE recipient GET theme. The two verbal heads, CAUSE and GET, each have one object in the underlying syntax. In the surface syntax, the lower verbal head GET moves up to the matrix verbal head CAUSE and combines with it to spell out the single verb CAUSE + GET = GIVE.

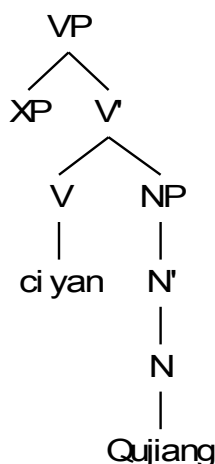
The biography of Zhang Jianfeng describes a banquet in Dianjiang. The *Old Tang History* writes 賜宰臣百僚宴於曲江亭 *ci zaichen bailiao yan yu Qu jiang ting* “Granted the ministers and officials a feast at the Qu jiang pavillion.”



The verb *ci* 'to grant' is a VP shell like the verb 'to give.' It is the result of the lower V GET moving up to the upper V CAUSE to form the complex verb *ci*. This structure violates the PSC at two points, once in the upper VP with the complex verbal head, and once in the lower VP with the adjunction at V-bar.

The *New Tang History* edits the sentence in such a way as to correct both of these left-branching nodes. The *New Tang History* writes simply 賜宴曲江 “feasted Qujiang.” In this structure, the locative prepositional phrase has been reanalyzed as the noun phrase object of a transitive verb. This is the same pattern identified in the examples above. In addition, the VP shell structure is altered. The recipients are eliminated from the sentence. Instead of occupying

the Specifier position of the upper VP, the verb first combines with the inner object *yan* to form a compound verb as the specifier of a VP that is not a shell, and then takes the place name *Qujiang* as its object.



The formation of this verb-object compound is the result of the PSC. In fact, the formation of such compounds is a major component of Huang's argument in favor of the PSC. He argues that the PSC requirement accounts for the ambiguous status of certain “verb compounds” which seem to be words in some contexts and phrases in other contexts. He writes:

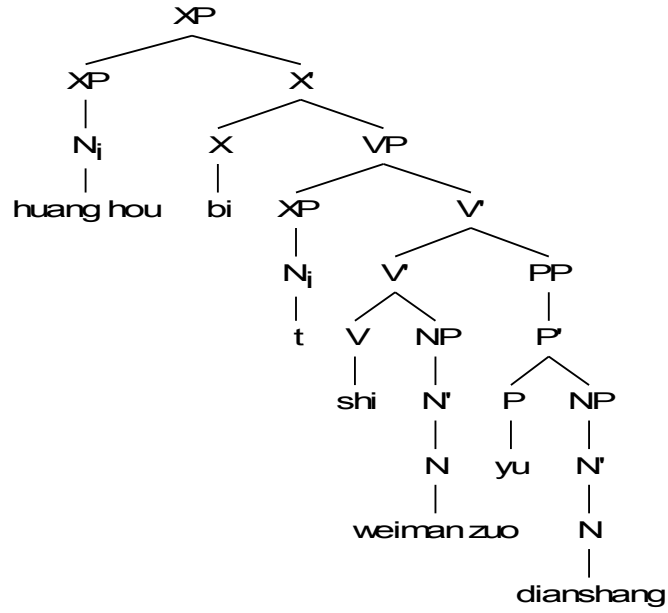
We list all V-O and V-R combinations only as phrases in the lexicon. The term ‘compound’ is thus inappropriate to them in the lexicon. Rather, dan-xin, etc. would be listed as idiom phrases. Then, when these phrases are inserted into sentence-final position nothing need take place. But if inserted into sentence-medial position, with an object following, they would undergo a process of lexicalization, by which a V-one-bar category is reanalyzed as a V-zero category, namely a phrase becomes a word. This then will prevent the PSC from taking effect and save the word from the PSC. This rule of lexicalization can be seen as a synchronic reflex of the historical process by which many compounds were derived.¹³⁸

¹³⁸ Huang (1984) pp. 69-70

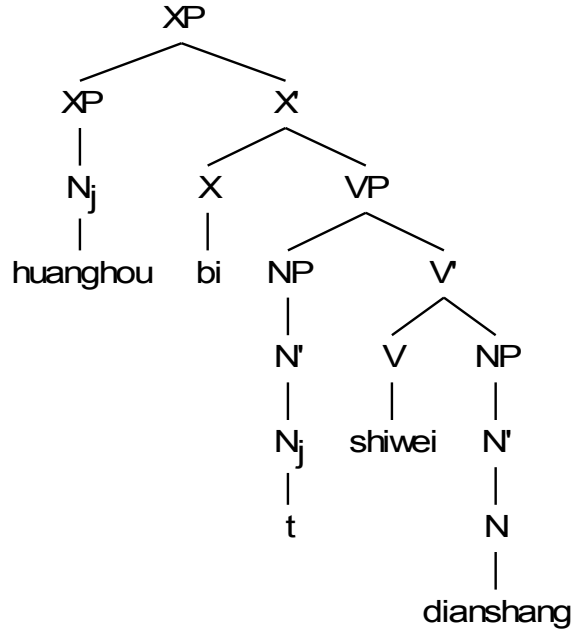
This process of lexicalization of Verb-Object compounds is the same process which is taking place in the prose of the *New Tang History*. And as Huang argues, the development of these verbal compounds was historically a direct result of the PSC. Their appearance in the *New Tang History* in order to prevent the PSC from taking effect further supports the argument that it is the PSC itself which is the underlying syntactic change from the syntax of the *Old Tang History* to the syntax of the *New Tang History*.

An additional example of the reanalysis of verb phrases as compound verbs comes from the biography of Huan Yanfan. It concerns the issue of Wu Zetian attending court behind a screen. The *Old Tang History* writes 皇后必施帷幔坐於殿上 *huanghou bi shi weiman zuo yu dianshang* “The Empress must install a screened and curtained throne at the top of the palace.” The *New Tang History* makes “install a screen” into a Verb-Object compound that can then take the locative Noun Phrase *dianshang* as its object.

The structure of the sentence in the *Old Tang History* is as follows:

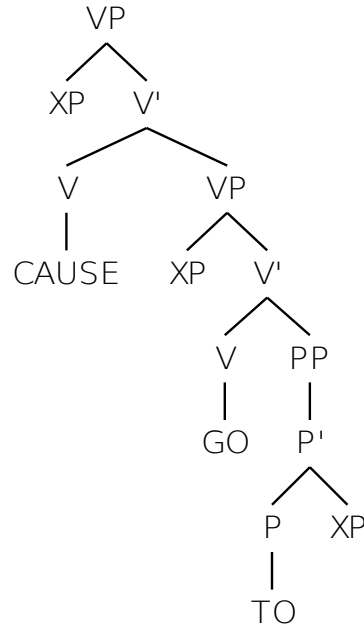


Just as predicted by Huang's theory, the *New Tang History* reanalyzes the VP phrase *shi weiman zuo* as a verb-object compound, *shi wei* which can then be followed by a Noun Phrase without violating the PSC:



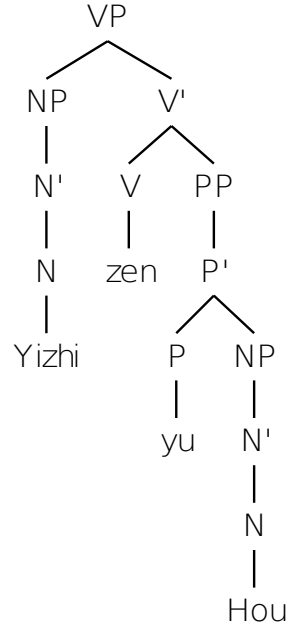
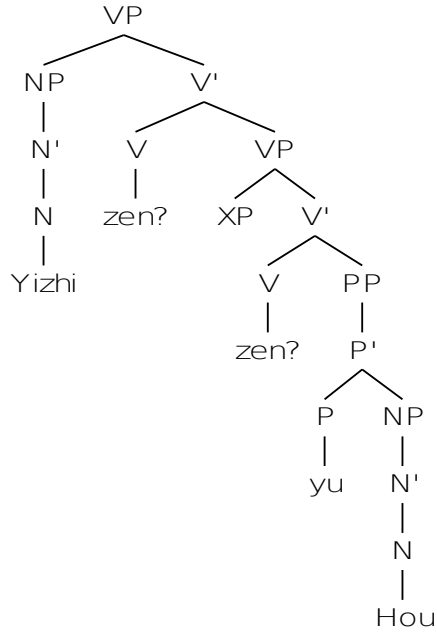
In addition to accounting for the decline in the use of prepositional phrases appearing after the VP, the PSC can also explain why it did not disappear altogether. There are certain contexts in which post-verbal prepositional phrases with *yu* continue to be productive, even in the *New Tang History*. This is because they are syntactic contexts which do not violate the PSC.

The concept of VP shells has already been described above in connection with the verb “to give” or “to grant.” There is another kind of VP shell often used in double object constructions which takes a prepositional phrase rather than a noun phrase as the complement of the lower VP. These kinds of verbs can be exemplified by SEND. The verb SEND can be understood as agent CAUSE theme GO TO location/recipient. This syntactic structure is represented as follows:

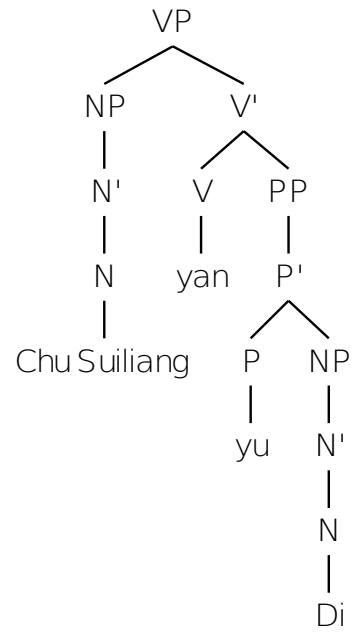
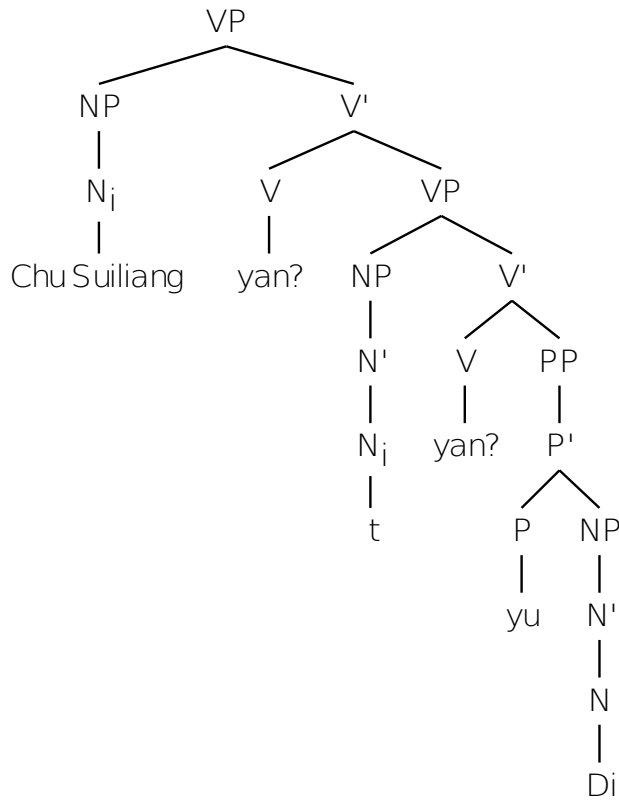


In this type of construction, the lower PP does not violate the PSC, because it is the complement of the VP rather than a modifier adjoined to the tree at V-bar level. Consequently, this explains the instances in which *yu* continues to be productive in the *New Tang History*. Most of these occur with verbs of telling or reporting. These verbs, I argue, have the same VP shell structure as SEND, with the upper verbal head being SPEAK rather than CAUSE, and the theme being a verbal message. Some examples from the *New Tang History* that are not in the original *Old Tang History* text are:

易之譖於后 *Yizhi zan yu Hou* “Yizhi reported to the Empress.”



褚遂良言於帝 *Chu Suiliang yan yu di* "Chu Suiliang said to the Emperor."



The biographies of Chu Suiliang, Yao Chong, and Song Jing comprise the longest texts with the most uses of *yu* in my corpus of closely related chapters in the two histories. All three of these biographies originate in the earliest layer of the *Old Tang History* the *National History* from the early eighth century. Consequently, the language of these two chapters is likely to represent the same historical phase of the language. Furthermore, since there were few other records available for the history of the seventh century, the text of the *Old Tang History* was likely to be the source for these chapters in the *New Tang History* (see Chapter 2).

Comparing the uses of *yu* in context shows that it is deleted from the *Old Tang History* 24 times, and added to the *New Tang History* 12 times. Eight of the times it was added were to introduce the indirect object. This suggests that the use of *yu* in locative phrases was not productive in the ancient style prose as the use of *yu* to indicate an indirect object.

Of the 24 cases where *yu* was deleted, in half of them the entire prepositional phrase was deleted. These instances are least useful, since it is unclear whether they were deleted because they were ungrammatical or because they were considered semantically extraneous. In the other 12 cases, however, the word *yu* is deleted, but the object of the preposition is retained and used as the object of the verb. This suggests that rather than being moved to before the VP or replaced with other prepositional phrases before the verb, the object of the preposition was used as the object of the verb without the preposition.

These patterns shed some light on the grammatical change taking place with the preposition *yu*, the historical syntax of Chinese, and the Song dynasty

ancient style prose. In terms of the preposition *yu*, my data suggest that the chronology proposed by Guo, in which the use of *yu* after the verb is replaced by the use of *zai* before the verb, is not the entire story. Although this was likely a contributing factor, a major mechanism of change was the move of prepositional objects to become objects of the verb itself.

Furthermore, as the locative function of *yu* decreased, the function of introducing the indirect object continued to be productive. This shows that these two functions were syntactically separate. The connection between this function of *yu* and the double object construction, as well as the phenomenon known as “dative shift” which occurs in other languages, is an interesting possibility for future syntactical research.

With respect to the language of the *New Tang History*, it shows that syntactically it is a later form of Chinese than the language of the *Old Tang History*. As the research of Guo and He outlined above shows, in the Zhou and Warring States periods, the use of *yu* was at a high point. The two most frequent uses were to indicate location and to indicate the indirect object. The pattern of grammatical change in the *New Tang History* is to delete *yu* and make its object the object of the verb. However, there is a counteractive tendency to add phrases with *yu* before the indirect object. If the eleventh-century ancient style prose was replicating the language of earlier literature, both of these uses should occur frequently. Instead, my analysis shows that phrases introduced by *yu* remained productive in only those syntactic environments in which it did not violate the PSC, a requirement of modern Chinese. Further research into both the

emergence of the PSC and the history of VP shells in Chinese syntax seem promising. However, the significant point for the present study is that regardless of whether the decline in use of *yu* is understood as a change in the surface feature VP + PP to PP + VP, or if it is analyzed as due to the emergence of the PSC, under either analysis, the syntax of the *New Tang History* ancient style prose is a more recent syntax than the syntax of the Tang, Han or Zhou.

3.3 Eleventh-century ancient style and the writing of Han Yu

As discussed in Chapter 2, the only periods of Tang history for which we have some primary sources from which the compilers of Tang histories worked are the founding of the dynasty, for which the *qiju zhu* 起居注 is extant, and the veritable records written by Han Yu for Shunzong's brief reign, the *Shunzong shilu* 順宗實錄. Since this veritable record was written by Han Yu, who was so highly esteemed by Northern Song ancient style writers, it is of particular interest. It raises the additional issue of the relationship between Han Yu's writing and the prose of the *New Tang History*. Since Han Yu is considered the torch-bearer of the ancient style, relaying it from Mencius to Ouyang Xiu, are the historical records he kept treated differently than the records from the first half of the Tang? How does the treatment of the words of the “Veritable Records of Emperor Shunzong” compare to the treatment of Han Yu's other writings in the *Old Tang History* and the *New Tang History*?

We must consider the question of whether or not the *Veritable Records* is in fact *guwen* writing. Han Yu is the most famous of the *guwen* writers, but that

doesn't necessarily mean that all of his writing is *guwen*. Han Yu's officially commissioned historical records may be written in a different style than his literary prose. The exchange of letters between Han Yu and Liu Zongyuan regarding Han's appointment in the department of history, translated [in the Appendix], suggests that Han may not have felt empowered to write official history in the ancient style as Ouyang Xiu was able to as an official historian in the literary and political climate of the eleventh century.

Besides the “Veritable Records of Emperor Shunzong” Han Yu's words appear in his own biographies, as well as in the biographies of others. Examining the differences in the use of Han Yu's writings in the *Old Tang History* and the *New Tang History* leads to the conclusions that the editors of the *New Tang History* admired Han Yu more for his fundamental beliefs than for his language or style of writing. These fundamental beliefs include a reliance on the Confucian Classics for precedents, outspoken criticism of those in power, and acceptance of banishment before moral compromise. The writings of Han Yu included in his biographies in both the *Old Tang History* and the *New Tang History* proclaim these values. They have little to say about the ancient style; in fact the majority of these writings are in parallel prose.

Table 3.2, “Example Comparison of the Shunzong shilu to the *Tang Mirror* and the *New Tang History*,” shows that the *Tang Mirror* uses the text of the Shunzong shilu verbatim, while the *New Tang History* edits the language. In other words, they each treated this source in the way that they treated other historical sources. That is, the *New Tang History* tends to paraphrase the

source, whereas the *Tang Mirror* tends to use exact excerpts from the source. [See chapter 2 on editing of historical sources] The fact that Han Yu's historical record is not copied verbatim by the *New Tang History*, but is treated on a par with historical sources by other authors, supports two possible conclusions about the relationship between Han Yu's historiographical writing and the historiographical writing of the *New Tang History*. One would be that the Shunzong shilu was not considered to be representative of Han Yu's ancient style, despite having been written by Han Yu. The other would be that Han Yu's ancient style was considered an inspiration for, but not a linguistic model for, the ancient style prose of the *New Tang History*. Examining the editing of Han Yu's historiographical writing in the *New Tang History* in comparison to the editing of his literary works suggests that both of these conclusions are true.

Returning to Table 3.1, it is clear that the editors of the *New Tang History* treated the biography of Han Yu differently than they treated biographies of others written by Han Yu. The biographies of Wei Zhiyi, Wang Shuwen, and Wang Pei are based on the materials in Han Yu's Shunzong shilu. These texts show the same decline in the usage of *yu* from the *Old Tang History* to the *New Tang History*, from 13 to 3. This is generally consistent with the trend in other biographies from sources not by Han Yu. It is the biography of Han Yu himself that stands out in contrast to the others. In this biography, there is hardly a change in the use of *yu*, from 46 in the *Old Tang History* to 42 in the *New Tang History*. Clearly, the writings by Han Yu included in his own biography were held in much higher esteem than the historical record he composed for the reign

of Shunzong. This supports the conclusion that this historical record, although written by Han Yu, was not regarded as typifying his ancient style writing.

As Table 3.1 shows, there is much less grammatical change between the two versions of Han Yu's biography than there is between the two histories in other chapters. Taking a closer look at Han's biographies in the *Old Tang History* and in the *New Tang History* reveals that this is because of the large proportion of works by Han Yu that are completely incorporated into his biographies without editing in both versions. And yet once again, when we look closely at these texts, they do not appear to be models for Song ancient style prose.

In both versions of his biography, there are a few of his compositions which are included verbatim. Both prominently feature the *Jin xue jie* (Explication of Progress in Learning) near the beginning of his biography. Both biographies then include Han's "Memorial on the Buddha Bone" in its entirety, for which he was exiled to Chaozhou; they also both include his memorial to the throne apologizing for offending the emperor with that memorial. What is striking about all three of these pieces however is the predominance of parallel prose in all three. In each case, Han Yu uses parallel prose to convey a Confucian message.

Initially it may seem surprising that the majority of Han Yu's writing in his biography in the *New Tang History* is not in "ancient style" but in parallel prose. Especially given the accolades bestowed on him by Ouyang Xiu in championing the ancient style. However, upon consideration, the texts included are those

which had the most profound impacts on his career. Since these are all writings composed for political reasons at a time when parallel prose was the officially sanctioned style of writing, Han continued to write in this style even as he may have experimented with new language and forms in less official compositions.

The first piece of Han Yu's writing to be quoted in his biography in both the *Old Tang History* and the *New Tang History* is his *Jin xue jie* 進學解 (Explication of Progress in Learning). It is included in its entirety in both biographies. This text makes liberal use of parallel prose. Ironically perhaps, the passages which draw parallels between Han Yu and the ancient Confucian sages are those which follow the most conventional parallel prose form.

This piece was written when Han Yu had been demoted to serve as an Erudite of the National University [*Guozi boshi* 國子博士]. It takes the form of a dialogue between Han Yu and one of his students. In the opening passage, Han Yu is exhorting his students to study hard, as they live in an age in which the sagely emperor and his wise ministers make good use of each and every talented scholar in the empire. One of his students objects, declaring that he has been studying under Han Yu for over a year and has observed how tirelessly his teacher has studied the Confucian classics and behaved with the utmost propriety, only to be demoted and impoverished. In this passage, Han Yu uses the voice of his student to sing the praises of his own accomplishments as a Confucian scholar. In doing so he proclaims the basic tenets of what would become the Neo-Confucian movement: studying diligently, refuting Buddhism and Daoism, writing on a par with the *Book of Documents*, the *Spring and*

Autumn Annals, the *Zuo zhuan*, the *Book of Changes*, the *Book of Poetry*, and the writings of Zhuangzi, Qu Yuan, Sima Qian, Yang Xiong, and Sima Xiangru. All of these are texts and authors from the Han and earlier, before what Han Yu considered to be the decline of literature due to the poetic trends of the Three Dynasties and early Tang periods. Han's writing represents "the same work in a different tune." And yet in this case, the tune is that of the parallel prose which he elsewhere derided for undermining the work of Confucian literature.

And it is not the case that it is just his student's words in this dialogue which are in the form of parallel prose. Han Yu's reply also frequently makes use of the parallel prose form. First he points out that Mencius and Xunzi were great Confucians, but neither of them achieved success in their lifetimes, implying that his own difficulties in his career are an indication of his achievements as a scholar. The implication is that even in times of sagely governance, great Confucians are often unrecognized by their contemporaries. Here Han Yu is appropriating the "scholar's lament" which Sima Qian so eloquently gave voice to in his postface to the *Records of the Historian*.¹³⁹

The next text which is reproduced in its entirety in both of Han Yu's biographies is his "Memorial on the Buddha Bone." This memorial begins with a litany of rulers of the past who enjoyed long life and long reigns prior to the arrival of Buddhism in China. Han's argument is that the rulers of the past who did not know of, much less revere, the Buddha enjoyed peace and longevity, and

¹³⁹ For discussions of this theme in early Chinese literature, see Stephen Durrant, *The Cloudy Mirror* (in particular Chapter 1), Hellmut Wilhelm "The Scholar's Frustration: Notes on a Type of 'Fu'," in John Fairbank, ed.(1967), and David Pankenier, "The Scholar's Frustration' Reconsidered: Melancholia or Credo?" (1990).

yet those rulers from the Eastern Han onwards who worshiped Buddhist relics had increasingly short reigns and often died young.

This opening passage is not in parallel prose, but this may well be do to the nature of the content: a list of emperors and the length of their reigns and lifespans. Once Han Yu moves to his argument regarding Buddhism, he shifts into predominantly 4 and 6 character parallel phrases.

The Buddha was originally a man of the barbarians who did not speak the language of the Middle Kingdom and was dressed in clothes of a different cut from ours. Neither did he cite the edifying discourses of the ancient sovereigns, nor did he don their proper attire. He was ignorant of the sense of duty between sovereign and subject, and the affections between father and son. If he were alive today, and were on a state mission to visit the court in the capital, and if Your Majesty would generously receive him, [Your Majesty] would merely grant him one audience in the Hall of Manifest Government (Xuanzheng dian). After one banquet was held at the Office of Foreign Relations, and one set of attire was conferred on him, [Your Majesty] would have guards escort him out of the country so that he would not be able to delude the masses. All the more, now that he has been dead for long, how can his withered and decayed bones and baleful and filthy remains be allowed into the forbidden palace? Confucius said, "Revere ghosts and spirits but keep them at a distance." In antiquity, when the various princes were about to hold mourning ceremonies in their states, even they would request shamans to use peach-wood charms and magic brooms to eradicate the ill-omened before they proceeded. Today for no good reason, the decayed and filthy object was brought to light for Your Majesty's viewing. It was neither proceeded by shamans nor exercised by peach-wood charms and magic brooms. No ministers have ever talked about its wrongs, and no censors have ever cited its faults. Your servant is truly horrified by this."¹⁴⁰ Again, the emphasis in this text is on his devotion to the Confucian cause.

This devotion is directed towards the well-being of the Emperor and the empire, but it is punished rather than reognized.

The third and final text which appears in its entirety in both of Han Yu's

¹⁴⁰ *Hawai'i Reader in Traditional Chinese Culture*, pp. 356-7 [see notes 14-17]

biographies is his memorial apologizing for the *Memorial on the Buddha Bone*. Here, much like in the *Explications of Progress in Learning*, he uses parallel prose to promote his identity as a loyal Confucian. It is followed by a conversation between the Emperor and two advisors who try to intervene on Han Yu's behalf. This conversation reveals that Han Yu's banishment to the south was not for his stance on Buddhism, but for lese majeste: he argues that the emperor's reverence for the Buddhist relic will lead to an early death. Predicting an early death for the reigning emperor was not only extremely disrespectful, it could be considered seditious. According to both the *Old Tang History* and the *New Tang History* version of events, Pei Du 裴度 and Cui Qun 崔群 memorialized to the throne that, while Han Yu's words may have been improper, he would not have been so outspoken were it not for the intense loyalty he felt towards the Emperor himself. The Emperor replied that Han could be forgiven for criticizing his excessive adoration of the Buddhist relic, but how could it be acceptable for him to say that Emperors from the Han onwards who uphold the Buddha all have shortened lifespans?

As these three texts show, Han Yu's devotion to the literature of the ancients was not always expressed in what would be promoted as the “ancient style” in the Song dynasty and later eras. In the writings which played a prominent role in his official career, he frequently used parallel prose, the dominant style of his time, to promote the ideology of a Confucian revival. Also, the syntax of these political works, as measured by the use of phrases with *yu* after the verb phrase, is the syntax of the *Old Tang History* more generally, not

that of the eleventh-century *New Tang History* prose.

The three texts discussed above each express the main ideas of this ideology. They exhibit a devotion to a canon of texts from the Han and earlier which includes the *Spring and Autumn Annals* and *Zuo Commentary*, the *Book of Documents*, the *Records of the Historian*, and the works of Mencius and Yang Xiong, and do not recognize the authority of Laozi, Buddhism, or the literary works canonized in the *Wen xin diao long* or the *Wen xuan*. They also exhibit a challenge to authority. In the case of the *Explication of Progress in Learning* this challenge to authority is both expressed and implied. It is expressed by the student within the text, who challenges his teacher's position that dedication to studying this canon of Confucian texts from the Han and earlier will necessarily lead to political success. Not only does the student challenge Han Yu's argument, he uses Han Yu's own apparent lack of political success as evidence of the falsity of his opinion that the sage Tang emperors will promote those who devote themselves to the study of this canon. Regardless of whether this conversation is real or fictitious, Han Yu's promulgation of a student's outspoken critique of not only his professed position on the value of studying but also of his own achievements promotes the idea that criticism of authority is not something that ought to be repressed. Despite the emphasis on hierarchy in many Confucian texts, the obligation of a minister to critique his ruler is also a prominent ideal. Han Yu's refutation of his student's criticism moreover serves as a critique of the reigning emperor for not recognizing and appreciating his talent.

The *Memorial on the Buddha Bone* is an even more explicit challenge to

the judgment of the emperor. It exhibits a devotion to “refuting Buddhism” which goes to such an extreme as to be deemed criminal. Even in his apology for this memorial, moreover, he continues to promote his own identity as a worthy Confucian whose insult to the emperor is motivated by concern for his well-being rather than any self-serving motives.

The biographies do offer some clues regarding which of Han's writings were considered to be *guwen*. At the end of the biographies, the *Old Tang History* and the *New Tang History* offer two different summaries of Han's literary achievements. They both note his opinion that Chinese literature had been in a state of decline since the achievements of the Han writers Sima Qian, Sima Xiangru, and Yang Xiong. They both attribute to him the creation of a new kind of literary language. However, they give differing descriptions of Han's own achievements in reviving that ancient way. The *New Tang History* declares that his essays *Yuan dao* 原道, *Yuan xing* 原性 and *Shi shuo/shui* 師說, along with the writings of Mengzi and Yang Xiong were the continuation of the Six Classics. There is no mention of this high praise in the *Old Tang History*.

In Han Yu's own time, the parallel prose style retained pride of place in official circles. The texts preserved in his biographies seem to be included not simply for his Confucian ideals, but rather due to the significant effects which they had on his official career: the *Explication of Progress in Learning* gained him promotion, the *Memorial on the Buddha Bone* nearly earned him a death sentence and led to his exile in the south, and his official apology for offending the emperor helped him be reinstated promoted from Chaozhou to Yuanzhou.

Han's experiments with “ancient style” prose were mostly contained in his personal writings anthologized in his collected works. As he himself predicted, this “eccentric” writing was not appreciated in his own day, but was later studied and promoted by Song scholars who desired to break with the Tang past, while maintaining the Confucian tradition.

In attempting to define linguistically the nature of ancient style prose, the data presented a more complex variety of writing than a simple contrast between parallel prose in the *Old Tang History* and ancient style prose in the *New Tang History*. Upon closer investigation, parallel prose is primarily used in quoted documents, [such as *zhang, shu, biao, etc.*] Many more of these are preserved verbatim in the *Old Tang History*. Some of them are also preserved in the *New Tang History*, but most often they are deleted, and the contents of the document briefly summarized. The passages relating to Taizu's correspondence with Li Mi, described in Chapter 2, provides a good illustration of this. In both the *Old Tang History* and the *New Tang History*, much of the text consists of historical narrative to provide a framework for the events described. This historical narrative is not in parallel prose in either text.

3.4 Sociolinguistics and Historical Syntax

As seen above, the syntax of *guwen* has been described as both new and ancient, vernacular and archaic, yet to my knowledge no formal description of the syntactic parameters of *guwen* in comparison to either pre-Han Chinese or to Song vernacular Chinese has been attempted. Moreover it is unclear whether *guwen* described a uniform style or was rather an ideological movement associated with writing which rejected the current style of parallelism in a variety

of genres. The genre of historical narrative about the Tang allows for a more controlled comparison, since we have available a parallel prose version (*Old Tang History*); an ancient style version (*New Tang History*); two privately composed histories, one composed before *guwen* was introduced in the examinations (*Discussions and Judgments on Tang History*) and one composed after it had come to dominate the exams (*Tang Mirror*); the ancient models for historical narrative (*Chunqiu* and *Zuozhuan*); and some of the primary sources for the compilation of Tang history (*Shunzong shilu*).¹⁴¹ The variations in syntax between these different sources cannot necessarily be assumed to reflect Song vernacular; nor can the ancient style movement's claim to be reviving the language of the pre-Han period be taken at face value. However I will assume that the different narratives employ the syntactic parameters of either the classics or the vernacular (or a mixture of the two) rather than a third syntax that corresponds to neither. In investigating the syntactic differences I will draw on contemporary generative grammar theory on historical syntax and our current understanding of why syntactic change occurs at all.

Empirical studies of syntactic change reveal that it has not occurred uniformly across languages, and in some languages little change has taken place at all. Anthony Kroch, in his overview of such studies, concludes that the rate of syntactic change in languages varies not only from language to language but also within the history of a single language, and notes that syntactic change among monolingual adult speakers of any language is unattested. It is language contact which appears to be the trigger for syntactic change.¹⁴² Syntactic change is a result of diglossia, the competition between a high register conservative literary grammar and a spoken vernacular grammar: “The best-studied cases of long-term syntactic drift are most plausibly cases of grammar competition (that is, syntactic diglossia) in which the competing forms may differ in social register,

¹⁴¹ In addition, Wu Zhen's 吳縝. *Xin Tang Shu Jiu Miu*. 新唐書糾謬 (Errors and Absurdities in the New Tang History), and Lü Xiaqing's 呂夏卿. *Tang Shu Zhi Bi*. 唐書直筆 (Direct Notes on the History of the Tang), both of which were written in the late 11th century in response to the revision of the official history, may be useful.

¹⁴² Anthony Kroch (2003) p. 699-700

with an unreflecting vernacular variant slowly driving a conservative written one out of use.”¹⁴³

The sociolinguistic situations which give rise to diglossia are primarily immigration and conquest.¹⁴⁴ Under such conditions two outcomes are possible, broadly termed “borrowing” and “substratum influence” or “language shift.” Borrowing is most common with lexical items, but evidence from synchronic studies of the sociolinguistics of diglossia shows that syntactic features are rarely borrowed. Syntactic change is instead the result of substratum influence.¹⁴⁵ Substratum influence occurs when a “later-arriving group, rather than assimilating to the language already spoken in the area, imports a new language that is subsequently spoken by those already living there.”¹⁴⁶

In medieval China, there was a migratory trend of wealthy and influential families to the south from the north as early as the Eastern Han. From the late Tang through the Five Dynasties this migratory trend accelerated, and continued in the Northern Song¹⁴⁷. Furthermore, southern literati increasingly dominated the examination culture of Song China.¹⁴⁸ This would have created the sociolinguistic conditions where southern vernacular syntax would be expected to have a substratum influence on the prestige written language originally from the north.

Consequently, the sociolinguistic situation in medieval China seems to fit the pattern of a society undergoing syntactic change as a result of syntactic diglossia:

...one would expect to see a shift over time in favor of the true “native” language of a community in cases of syntactic diglossia. Of course, this model depends on one of the diglossic variants being more native than the other. This would be true if, for example, it was the native variant for more speakers. It would also be true if the variants differed in social register. If one of the

¹⁴³ Anthony Kroch (2003) p. 702

¹⁴⁴ Gillian Sankoff (2002) pp. 638-644

¹⁴⁵ See Gillian Sankoff (2002) and Donald Winford (2003) ch. 1 “Introduction: The Field of Contact Linguistics” for theoretical overviews of the relationship between bilingualism and language change.

¹⁴⁶ Gillian Sankoff (2002) p. 646

¹⁴⁷ See Robert Hartwell (1982)

¹⁴⁸ See John Chaffee (1995)

variants belonged to the vernacular (that is, the language learned in infancy) while the other belonged to a superposed prestige language acquired a bit later in life, then the necessary asymmetry would be established. This latter scenario seems particularly likely for the sorts of change that linguistic historians have data on. We are limited to the written language, often of societies with a low rate of literacy and sharp class distinctions in language. In these circumstances, it could easily be the case that the forms in competition in syntactic diglossia represent an opposition between an innovative vernacular and a conservative literary language. Since the former would have both a psycholinguistic advantage and the advantage of numbers, it should win out over time, even in written texts.¹⁴⁹

Yan Zhitui 顏之推 (531-591) in his *Yan shi jia xun* 顏氏家訓 (Family Instructions for the Yan Clan) attests to differences between northern and southern dialects of the high register language already existing by the mid 6th century. Liu Zhiji 劉知幾 (661-721) in his *Shi tong* 史通 (Comprehending History) devotes a chapter to “words and speech” (*yan yu* 言語), in which he discusses the fact that the language had changed since Han times and expresses his opinions on whether or not historians should record plain speech or embellish it in the style of the ancient language. These authors' concerns confirm that there was indeed linguistic diglossia contributing to language change in China well before the Northern Song period.

In summary, the phenomenon of syntactic change is the result of vernacular grammatical influence on a conservative written grammar. Thus one would expect changes in syntax occurring in the written language to be changes which bring the written register closer to the syntax of the vernacular of the speech community of the majority of users of the written register.¹⁵⁰ The *guwen* movement, however, makes just the opposite claim: to revive a more conservative language from the Han and earlier. Conducting a comparative linguistic analysis of related texts from the Northern Song period will resolve this seeming contradiction.

¹⁴⁹ Anthony Kroch (2003) pp. 722-723

¹⁵⁰ FENG Shengli (2010) finds that high register “elegant” (典雅) Chinese today uses classical elements in accord with vernacular grammar, as expected; see his discussion on pp. 407-409

The *Discussions and Judgments on Tang History* and the *Tang Mirror* largely comprise their authors' opinions on Tang events presented as an oral lecture. Are these words a spoken register of Song Chinese, or do they imitate the words of Master Zuo in his *Zuozhuan*? Comparing these texts with the accounts of the same events in the parallel prose of the *Old Tang History* and the ancient style prose of the *New Tang History*, as well as with vernacular texts of the time, I will develop a more precise picture of what it meant linguistically and rhetorically to Northern Song historians to write in the style of the *Spring and Autumn Annals* and the *Zuozhuan*.

3.5 Conclusions

A grammatical analysis of patterns of change in the prose of the two texts shows that with respect to certain significant syntactic changes in the language of the *New Tang History* in comparison to the language of the *Old Tang History*, the grammar of the *New Tang History* reflects a later form of Chinese syntax, rather than a revival of the grammar of the language from before the Han dynasty. Specifically, there is a decrease in the locative use of the preposition *yu* in post-verbal prepositional phrases. This change is related to the shift from VP + PP syntax to PP + VP syntax. It also involves the shift of certain objects from object of the preposition to object of the verb as part of the disappearance of VP + PP. These, I argue, are the surface effects of the PSC, which remains a feature of modern Chinese, but was not a feature of ancient Chinese.

In attempting to determine what, if any, linguistic characteristics define ancient style prose, I have conducted the following comparisons. 1) Comparison of the *Old Tang History* and the *New Tang History* with available primary source documents. 2) Comparison of the use of Han Yu's writings in the *Old*

Tang History and the *New Tang History*. 3) Comparison of the *Tang Mirror* to the narrative accounts in the *Old Tang History*, the *New Tang History* and the available primary source documents.

The syntactic changes described above suggest that the prose of the *New Tang History* represents a later rather than an earlier grammar, and therefore most likely reflects the influence of eleventh-century syntax on the ancient style prose of the time. The one clear consistent feature of this ancient style prose is the ability to express ideas clearly with as few words as possible. Based on these comparisons, I conclude that for these historians, the ancient style was not so much a matter of language as it was a matter of promoting the image of the Confucian scholar who risks punishment to express his outspoken criticisms of those in authority, rather than flattering the ruler to maintain political office. In this respect Han Yu's ancient style was not admired due to his actually replicating the language of the past, but rather because of his reverence for the Chinese past, and irreverence towards conventions of his day. For the editors of the *New Tang History*, ancient style meant conveying that message as concisely as possible.

Chapter 4: The Politics of Writing Tang History in the 11th Century, From Qingli (1041-1049) to Chongning (1102-1106)

The previous chapters focused on a close comparison of historical information included in multiple sources, including primary sources extant from the Tang period itself, to better understand the underlying historiographical methods and linguistic practices of Song period revisions of Tang history. Specifically, comparing the texts of the *Tang Mirror*, the *New Tang History* and the *Old Tang History* to the available extant sources from the Tang era showed that as a general pattern, the *Old Tang History* most often preserved verbatim extensive passages from the primary sources, whereas the *New Tang History* and the *Tang Mirror* demonstrated proclivities for paraphrasing and excerpting the sources. Generally the *New Tang History* uses paraphrase more often and the *Tang Mirror* tends to excerpt key passages as direct quotations, but each of these texts resort to both methods. None of the sources, however, appear to resort to falsification, misrepresentation or fabrication of historical sources. From this I conclude that the *Old Tang History* and the *Tang Mirror* preserve the written language of the Tang period intact, while the *New Tang History* represents a written language of the Song era. It also shows that Song historians, in their revisions of Tang history, did not fabricate any events, but rather selectively edited reliable sources to mold their narratives.

Although there are primary historical records extant for only two relatively brief periods of Tang history, the period of the founding of the dynasty (617-626)

and the period from the 18th birthday of the man who would be Shunzong until his death (780-805), in the absence of evidence for other periods I will assume that these historiographical methods were consistently applied by historians during the Song period in using other primary sources from the Tang which have since been lost.

In addition to these historiographical conclusions, the choice of content suggests certain ideological motivations of the historians. Specifically, the exaltation of outspoken ministers, such as Sun Fujia and Wei Cigong who are not afraid to speak truth to power, and the criticism of ministers who manipulate the political system for their own personal gain, such as Wang Shuwen. When the historians' criticisms of events is taken into consideration, in addition to their historical narrative, this message becomes even more evident.

4.1 The Moral and Political Roles of Chinese History

The idea that history should be composed from a morally didactic point of view was not new in the Tang or Song dynasties. Since at least the Han, the goal of history in Chinese culture was to assign praise and blame to the people of the past, in order to offer encouragement and warnings to people of the present. This idea was associated with two of the great early models for Chinese historiography, the *Chunqiu* (春秋 Spring and Autumn Annals) and the *Shi ji* (史記 Records of the Historian). As Paul Goldin has argued with respect to early Chinese historiography, "...we cannot assume a post-Rankean philosophy of history when we read ancient Chinese writers. If we are to come to appreciate

how *they* may have regarded appeals to history, we must shed any presumption that Chinese historians (and their audiences) felt constrained by objectivist concerns.”¹⁵¹

In her recent book on the interpretation of the Spring and Autumn Annals, *From Chronicle to Canon: The Hermeneutics of the Spring and Autumn according to Tung Chung-shu*, Sarah Queen traces the development of this moral didactic view of history in the Warring States and Han periods. Her focus is primarily on the development of the Gongyang commentary and its associated hermeneutics, much of her argument is relevant to early readings of the Spring and Autumn Annals and of history more broadly.

Queen argues that the belief in the moral nature of the Spring and Autumn Annals originated with claims made by Mencius that Confucius composed the Annals for moral purposes. According to Mencius, Confucius composed this history to elucidate the proper Way which had fallen into decline in the Warring States period of conflict. By composing a morally nuanced historical record of the times, Confucius was preserving the Way of the ancients, but at the same time, challenging the official dynastic monopoly on historiography.¹⁵² Early interpretations of the Spring and Autumn Annals attributed to history the ability to censor and restrict abuses of power by emperors, kings and officials. Queen states,

For early interpreters, the text was nothing short of Confucius's

¹⁵¹ Paul Goldin, “Appealing to History,” *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 35.1 (2008) p. 83

¹⁵² Sarah Queen, *From Chronicle to Canon: The Hermeneutics of the Spring and Autumn according to Tung Chung-shu*, pp. 118-119. Translations of the passages from Mencius on which Queen bases her argument appear on pp. 118, 119, and 121; see also Lau 1976 pp. 114-115.

radical critique of the evils of his day. The terror he evoked in the hearts of those who were the worst offenders illustrates the tremendous censorial power with which history was now endowed. Far from a dispassionate recorder of deeds, in his capacity as a self-proclaimed historian Confucius had become the paradigmatic critic. Speaking in his stead, Confucius censored the ruler's subordinates in the sociopolitical hierarchy of his day.¹⁵³

Already by the Han, then, the narration of the past was viewed as a means to criticize the present. During the Han, scholars such as Dong Zhongshu and Sima Qian expanded the perceived power of history to not only criticize the present, but also to predict the future. “They argued that one divines the future not by means of tortoise shell, bone or milfoil but rather through careful scrutiny of the past....History had become a mirror capable of reflecting the future as well as the past.”¹⁵⁴

In his book *The Cloudy Mirror: Tension and Conflict in the Writings of Sima Qian*, Stephen Durrant traces the intimate relationship between the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, the hermeneutics of Dong Zhongshu, and the other paradigmatic work of Chinese historiography, the *Shi ji* (史記 Records of the Historian) by Sima Qian 司馬遷. Durrant argues persuasively that the image of Confucius as the moral historian behind the *Spring and Autumn Annals* is largely an artifact of Sima Qian's construction of his own identity as the inheritor of that role from Confucius in writing the *Records of the Historian*. Both the writing of the *Spring and Autumn Annals* by Confucius, and the writing of the *Records of the Historian* by Sima Qian, are prime exemplars of frustrated scholars who do not meet with acceptance or acknowledgment in their own time, and so turn to

¹⁵³ Ibid., p. 121

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 124

literature to address a future generation who will appreciate their worth. The theme of the “scholar's frustration” has been depicted in detail by Hellmut Wilhelm and has exerted a powerful influence on the subsequent history of Chinese literature.¹⁵⁵ Durrant argues that although he is not the earliest of these famous frustrated scholars, Sima Qian is arguably the creator of this archetype:

One can, of course, point to earlier figures, Confucius and the poet Qu Yuan (?347-?277 B.C.E.) among them, whose lives exemplify the “scholar's frustration,” but we know of these figures and become aware of their unhappy obstruction precisely because of the way they are portrayed in *Records of the Historian*. In other words, these paradigmatic representatives of frustration are in large measure Sima Qian's creations!¹⁵⁶

Durrant describes in detail how Sima Qian developed the narrative of Confucius as author of the Spring and Autumn Annals, and as editor of the other works in the Han classical canon. In doing so, Sima Qian draws heavily on the work of Dong Zhongshu (cf the research of Sarah Queen, outlined above), in places quoting directly from Dong's *Chun qiu fan lu* (Abundant Dew of Spring and Autumn Annals).¹⁵⁷ However, as Durrant points out, there are differences between Dong Zhongshu and Sima Qian in their understanding of the Spring and Autumn Annals. The two scholars agree with one another (and with Mencius) that the Spring and Autumn Annals were written by Confucius, and that his reason for doing so was to pass judgment on political events for the elucidation of future generations after his failure to directly influence political events during his own time. Both Sima Qian and Dong Zhongshu also agree that the terse language

¹⁵⁵ See “The Scholar's Frustration: Notes on a Type of Fu,” *Chinese Thought and Institutions*, ed. By John K. Fairbank (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967)

¹⁵⁶ Stephen Durrant, *The Cloudy Mirror*, p. 14

¹⁵⁷ Stephen Durrant, *The Cloudy Mirror*, pp. 57-67

of the Spring and Autumn Annals does not make explicit its true meaning in its entirety, and required further oral explication, which was later written down in such exegetical traditions as the Gongyang, Guliang, and Zuo zhuan commentaries to the text. However, whereas Dong Zhongshu promoted the Gongyang commentary with its precepts that the esoteric language of the Spring and Autumn Annals was a kind of code that, once understood, could reveal timeless and even metaphysical principles abstracted from the concrete historical events of the historical text, Sima Qian most valued the *Zuo zhuan* which purported to flesh out the principles of the Spring and Autumn Annals by filling in more particular details that may have been considered by Confucius too delicate to commit to writing.¹⁵⁸

An inherent conflict for Chinese historians since Sima Qian's time in modeling their historical work on the *Spring and Autumn Annals* has been the conflict between the terse and concise approach of the annals themselves, and the prolix narratives of the *Zuo zhuan*. As the Tang historian Liu Zhiji pointed out, this conflict has been resolved in many cases by using sparse, and even esoteric, narratives of events in the *ben ji* 本紀 (basic annals) accounts of events at the beginning of official histories, and providing more detailed and colorful narratives of events in the *lie zhuan* 列傳 (biographies) that make up the majority of the text in dynastic histories:

The rise to prominence of annals and biographies began with the [*Shi ji* Records of the Historian] and [*Han shu* History of the Han]. The annals are in chronologically arranged form [*bian nian*]. The biographies take the form of connected events [*lie shi*]. The

¹⁵⁸ Stephen Durran, *The Cloudy Mirror*, pp. 65-68

chronological form [*bian nian*] sets out in order the years and months of Emperors and Kings as does the Classic of Spring and Autumn. The form of connected events [*lie shi*] records the actions of subjects and ministers like the Traditions to the Spring and Autumn Annals. In the case of the Spring and Autumn Annals, they made Traditions to explain the Classic itself. In the case of the [*Shi ji*] and [*Han shu*] they provided biographies to explain the basic annals.¹⁵⁹

From the time of the Han up until the Tang, the orthodox interpretations of the *Spring and Autumn Annals* according to either the *Gongyang*, *Guliang*, or *Zuozhuan* tradition were codified in official commentaries culminating in those included in the *wu jing zheng yi* 五經正義 (Correct Commentaries on the Five Classics). In the 9th century, however, beginning with the scholarship of Dan Zhu, a new critical approach to the *Spring and Autumn Annals* emerged. As Edwin Pulleyblank has explained:

Before the time of [Dan Zhu], students of the *Spring and Autumn Annals* had generally followed the tradition of one or another of the three commentaries established in the Han period--[Gongyang, Guliang or Zuo]--and though they might supply deficiencies in their favored commentary by reference to the others, there was little or no attempt to make any fundamental criticism of the accepted opinions about them. [Dan Zhu], however, proposed to reject the authority of all three commentaries and return directly to the Classic itself to establish on a rational basis the rules of “praise and blame” which Confucius had used in editing it.¹⁶⁰

Pulleyblank goes on to point out that this kind of rational critical approach, characterized by the “cool, detached, and methodical rationality with which they attempted to get at the truth,” was not seen in European scholarship

¹⁵⁹ Translated by Denis Twitchett “Biographical Writing” in Pulleyblank, editor, *Historians of China and Japan* p. 98

¹⁶⁰ Edwin Pulleyblank “Neo-Confucianism and Neo-Legalism in T'ang Intellectual Life, 755-805” in Wright, editor, *The Confucian Persuasion*, p.89

until the 17th century.¹⁶¹ This critical approach to the classics and doubting of the past was further developed by Song scholars. Because of the close relationship between *Spring and Autumn Annals* scholarship and historical writing, these new critical approaches to the classic historical annal and new approaches to historiography developed in tandem during the Song period.

4.2 Tang Taizong in Song Historical Criticism

Differing approaches by Song authors regarding how best to adapt the proper methods of historiography can perhaps best be illustrated by their treatment of the Xuanwu gate incident, when the prince Li Shimin killed his brothers in order to ascend the throne as Tang Taizong. The original account of this event as recorded in the *Old Tang History* and in the *Taiping yulan* states that “Because the crown prince Jiancheng and the King of Qi Yuanji were plotting together to harm him, the King of Qin [Li Shimin] led troops to execute (誅) them. An edict declared the King of Qin to be the crown prince.” 秦王以皇太子建成與齊王元吉同謀害己率兵誅之詔立秦王為皇太子¹⁶² This was the official version authorized by Tang Taizong to legitimate his rule, and, probably due to the long and peaceful reign of Tang Taizong and his success in establishing the dynasty, it was largely unchallenged during the Tang period.

For Song historians, despite Taizong's success as a ruler, his actions in attaining the throne were still susceptible to criticism and blame. In the official revision presented by the *New Tang History*, this criticism was encoded in the

¹⁶¹ Pulleyblank, “Neo-Confucianism and Neo-legalism in Tang Intellectual Life, 755-805,” in Arthur Wright, editor, *The Confucian Persuasion*, p. 90

¹⁶² JTS ch.1 p. 19

choice of vocabulary used to report the event. Following the approach of the Gongyang school, as described above in the discussion of Dong Zhongshu and the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, for the official historians, the selection of particular words carried certain implications that would be understood by the reader without necessitating an overly explicit critique of the sovereign. Thus, in the *New Tang History*, the official account was revised to read, “The King of Qin [Li Shimin] killed (殺) the crown prince Jiancheng and the King of Qi Yuanji.” 秦王世民殺皇太子建成齊王元吉大¹⁶³ The omission of any pretext of Shimin avenging a perceived threat, and the changing of the word *zhu* 誅 (execute) to the word *sha* 殺 (kill) was considered by the official historians to sufficiently convey, to an informed reader, severe censure of this action. Whereas execute connotes a legal justification for killing, kill does not.

For Fan Zuyu, however, such an implicit censure was not adequate. In his critique of this event in the *Tang Mirror*, he spells out in detail his opprobrium.

Your servant Zuyu says: Jiancheng, although lacking accomplishments, was the Prince; Taizong, although he had accomplishments, was a feudal king. The Prince is the king’s second, the descendant of his father, and to kill him is to be without ruler or father. Princes are established according to their age, not according to their accomplishments, that is what the generations of former rulers considered important. For this reason the Duke of Zhou did not possess All under Heaven. The younger brother, although he is equally wise, does not take precedence over his older brother. For some time now there have been those who argue that perhaps Taizong killing Jiancheng and Yuanji compares to the Duke of Zhou’s executing Guan and Cai¹⁶⁴, but I myself don’t see it like that. Among the ancients, Xiang plotted daily to kill Shun. Shun, being the emperor, enfeoffed him. Guan and Cai spied for Shang

¹⁶³ NTS ch. 1 p. 21

¹⁶⁴ younger brothers of King Wu of Zhou, killed by the Duke of Zhou to prevent them from usurping the throne from King Wu’s young son, see p. 20

and rebelled against Zhou. The Duke of Zhou, being the prime minister, executed them. Though the tracks are different the Way is the same. Shun knew of Xiang's intending to kill him, and so when Xiang worried he also worried, and when Xiang was pleased he also was pleased. He was completely sincere in loving him and that is all. Xiang committed crime against Shun and so he enfeoffed him. Guan and Cai spread word throughout the country that they were going to endanger the Duke of Zhou in order to divide the royal house, committing a crime against all under Heaven, and so [all under Heaven] executed them. It was not the Duke of Zhou executing them, they were the ones who should be executed by all under Heaven. How did the Duke of Zhou gain anything for himself? In subsequent generations if there are kings who are unfortunate and have younger brothers who harm their older brothers like Xiang, then it is proper to enfeoff them like Shun did, if they are unfortunate and have older brothers who disturb all under Heaven like Guan and Cai then they ought to execute them as the Duke of Zhou did. Shun managed his constancy, the Duke of Zhou managed his changes. This is the way in which wise men both return to the Way.

In the case of Jiancheng and Yuanji, how are they ones who committed crime against all under Heaven? If they are not ones who committed crime against all under Heaven, then the one who kills him, being for his own personal [motives], how is this the heart of the Duke of Zhou? Others also assume that if Jiancheng became emperor assisted by Yuanji then the Tang necessarily would have fallen. I say,

“The Ancient sages were ones who accepted death rather than doing anything unrighteous, because they considered righteousness as more important than death. It must be that if one is Emperor without being filial, is a younger brother without being fraternal, opposes the principles of Heaven, wipes out normal relations among people and obtains all under Heaven, it is not nearly as good as losing it.”

For this reason the authors of the Tang history wrote: “The king of Qin Li Shimin killed the Imperial Prince Jiancheng and the King of Qi Yuanji. The Emperor made Shimin Imperial Prince.” In that way they wrote Taizong's crime.

臣祖禹曰建成雖無功太子也太宗雖有功藩王也太子君之貳父之統也而殺之是無君父也立子以長不以功所以重先君之世也故周公不有天下弟雖齊聖不先於兄久矣論者或以太宗殺建成元吉比周公誅管蔡臣竊以為不然昔者象日以殺舜為事舜為天子也則封之舜弟象日以殺舜為事立為

天子封之有庫出孟子管蔡啓商以叛周周公為相也則誅之相去聲其迹不同而其道一也舜知象之將殺已也故象憂亦憂象喜亦喜盡其誠以親愛之而已矣並孟子萬章象得罪於舜故封之管蔡流言於國書金縢武王既喪管叔及其群弟乃流言于國曰公將不利于孺子將危周公以間王室間去聲得罪於天下故誅之非周公誅之天下之所當誅也周公豈得而私之哉後世如有王者不幸而有害兄之弟如象則當如舜封之是也不幸而有亂天下之兄如管蔡則當如周公誅之是也舜處其常周公處其變此聖人所以同歸於道也若夫建成元吉亦得罪於天下者乎苟非得罪於天下則殺之者已之私也豈周公之心乎或者又以為使建成為天子又輔之以元吉則唐必亡臣曰古之賢人守死而不為不義者義重於死故也必若為子不孝為弟不弟悖天理滅人倫而有天下不若亡之愈也故為唐史者書曰秦王世民殺皇太子建成齊王元吉立世民為皇太子然則太宗之罪著矣¹⁶⁵

4.3 Historical Analogism

In addition to this more explicit and outspoken criticism in Song historiography, the other prominent new development is the dominant understanding of the past in terms of “historical analogism” in philosophical inquiry and political debate. As such, the goal of historical scholarship was less to uncover the facts regarding the past, and more to illustrate moral principles relevant to immediate concerns. In his extremely influential article, “Historical Analogism, Public Policy, and Social Science in Eleventh- and Twelfth-Century China,” Robert Hartwell coins the term “historical analogism” to describe this new view of history, which developed out of the moral-didactic view of history, during the intellectual revolutions which took place after the An Lushan rebellion of 755.¹⁶⁶ Historical analogism is “the view that the comparative study of similar historical phenomena could provide an accurate guide in evaluating

¹⁶⁵ SKQS Tang jian ch. 2 pp. 6-8

¹⁶⁶ Robert Hartwell, “Historical Analogism, Public Policy and Social Science in Eleventh- and Twelfth-Century China,” p. 694; see also E. G. Pulleyblank, “Neo-Confucianism and Neo-Legalism in T'ang Intellectual Life, 755-805,” in Arthur Wright, ed. *The Confucian Persuasion*, pp. 77-114

contemporary policy.”¹⁶⁷ Eleventh- and twelfth- century writers emphasized the importance of the Tang in particular, because its laws, institutions and customs were most similar to the Song, its history was recorded in the most detail, and it had united China for three centuries.¹⁶⁸ And while the didactic view of history may not have been entirely new in the Song, it was increasingly influential, due to the developments in the civil service examination and in the imperial seminar.

The historical analogist view of history in general, and of Tang history in particular, was not just a scholastic movement. It was also the dominant view among many influential policy-makers during the Song dynasty. “It was reflected in the evolution of political and educational institutions, in the development of new genres of historical writing, and in the transmission, refinement, and utilization of the propositions of Chinese social and economic theory.”¹⁶⁹ From the early 11th century through the end of the Song dynasty, this view had a significant impact on two very important institutions, the civil service examinations and the imperial seminar. One of the reforms proposed during the Qingli 慶曆 (1041-1048) era was the replacement of poetry composition with the composition of policy essays based on historical precedents in the civil service exams. The imperial seminar was established to educate the child emperor Renzong 仁宗 (r. 1022-1063) to prepare him to rule the empire on his own (beginning in 1033). However, Renzong retained the imperial seminar once he

¹⁶⁷ Robert Hartwell, “Historical Analogism, Public Policy and Social Science in Eleventh- and Twelfth-Century China,” p. 694

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 695, which includes a translation of Zhang Fangping's argument for the importance and relevance of Tang history, written in the 1060s.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 695-696

reached his majority, so that it served from then on not just to educate young emperors, but to provide a forum for scholarly debate based on history and the classics as applied to current government policy.¹⁷⁰

Both of these institutions were closely tied to educational curricula. The civil service examinations set the standards for what all aspiring government officials needed to know and do; the imperial seminar represented the application of this knowledge and practice at the highest levels of the civil service bureaucracy in educating and advising the ruler. Consequently, the significance of historical analogism in the exams and in the imperial seminar created a demand for books of historical models, of which Fan Zuyu's *Tang Mirror* was the most influential.¹⁷¹ As Hartwell describes:

The careful attention given to the education of the prince and the sovereign was partly due to the realization of scholar-officials of the need for creating a bond of shared values and modes of political analysis between the ruler and his advisers. And the historical analogism taught by the officers of imperial instruction was also a central part of the civil servant's education, recruitment, and technique of policy formation.¹⁷²

What is new in Song historiography about the Tang, then, is not the idea that history should be the source of moral lessons to guide the ruler and his advisers in leading the empire, since this idea had been prominent in historical scholarship in China since at least the Han dynasty if not the Warring States period. However, in the Song, historians did more than encode the encouragements and warnings of historiographical writing in their subtle choice

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., p.p. 696-697

¹⁷¹ Robert Hartwell, "Historical Analogism, Public Policy and Social Science in Eleventh- and Twelfth-Century China," p. 698

¹⁷² Ibid., pp. 702-703

of words, as Confucius was believed to have done in the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, or in brief critiques at the end of long chapters, as Sima Qian had done in the *Records of the Historian*. In historical criticism texts such as the *Tang Mirror* and the *Discussions and Judgments on Tang History*, implications of the historical events are made explicit in critiques of those events, which frequently interrupt the historical narrative and are often much lengthier than the description of events themselves. They offer a more extensive and more direct corpus of editorial on Tang history than just those texts examined in the previous chapter. In this chapter I compare editorial critiques from a variety of Northern Song texts about Tang history which make explicit the moral lessons to be learned from the past, and how Tang history was debated as an analogy for issues current during the Northern Song, when these histories were being written.

4.4 Political Conflict in Historical Criticism

A good example of this which is drawn from the material already introduced in the previous chapter is the incident of the minister Zheng Xunyu's resignation in protest of Wang Shuwen's abuse of power. The account of this event in the *Veritable Records of the Reign of Emperor Shunzong* is as follows:

Previously, when [Wang] Shuwen took charge of the administration of internal and external affairs, he plotted with his clique as follows: "If we controlled the office of Ministry of Revenue, the national revenues would be in our hands. We would thereby be able to secure the alliance of those in positions of power and the allegiance of the soldiers, and so enhance our authority." But they feared that his sudden rise to a position of importance such as this would not seem right to the people. Wang therefore relied upon Du You's general reputation for finance, his important position, and his constant devotion to his own self-preservation which made him

easy to control from behind the scenes.¹⁷³

叔文既專內外之政與其黨謀曰判度支則國賦在手可以厚結諸用事人取兵士心以固其權驟使重職人心不服藉杜佑雅有會計之名位重而務自全易可制故先令佑主其名而除之為副以專之¹⁷⁴

On the cyclic day *ding you* 丁酉 [of the third month] (April 30, 805), Zheng Xunyu, the Chief Minister of the Bureau of Personnel, resigned his post on the pretext of illness. On that day, Zheng Xunyu was having dinner together with the other chief ministers at the Department of the Secretariat. According to tradition, when chief ministers are dining, no officials may venture to seek an audience with them. On this day, [Wang] Shuwen came to the Secretariat, wishing to discuss some matters with Wei Zhiyi. He directed the Receptionist to communicate with (i.e., announce his arrival to) [Wei] Zhiyi but was informed by the Receptionist of the ancient tradition, for which [Wang] Shuwen abused him. The Receptionist, in fear, went to tell [Wei] Zhiyi who, reluctant and embarrassed, finally arose and went to meet [Wang] Shuwen. They went into his council chamber and talked for quite a while. The chief ministers Du You, Gao Ying, and Zheng Xunyu all put down their utensils in order to wait for him. A messenger said that [Wang] Shuwen has asked for food and that Minister Wei was already eating with him in the chamber. [Du] You, [Gao] Ying, and the others were aware that this was not proper; but since they feared [Wang] Shuwen and [Wei] Zhiyi, they dared not utter a word. [Zheng] Xunyu alone sighed and said, “How can I continue to hold office?” He turned to his attendants, ordered them to fetch his horse, and went directly home, thereupon retiring from office. Before this, the Left Vice President of the Ministry of State, Jia Dan, retired to his home because of illness and did not take office again. Zheng Xunyu followed suit and left. Both chief ministers were held in high regard throughout the nation and retired one after the other. [Wang] Shuwen, [Wei] Zhiyi, and the others were so much the more without anyone to fear. As a result, they were regarded with great dread both far and near.¹⁷⁵

丁酉吏部尚書平章事鄭珣瑜稱疾去位其日珣瑜方與諸相會食於中書故事丞相方食百寮無敢謁見者叔文是日至中書欲與執誼計事令直省通執誼直省以舊事告叔文叱直省直省懼入白執誼執誼逡巡慙赧竟起迎叔文就其閣語良久宰相杜佑高郢珣瑜皆停筯以待有報者云叔文索飯韋相已與之同餐閣中矣佑郢等心知其不可畏懼叔文執誼莫敢出言珣瑜獨歎曰

¹⁷³ Bernard Solomon, p. 19

¹⁷⁴ SKQS Dong ya tang chang li ji zhu, wai ji zhu 7: 4

¹⁷⁵ Solomon pp. 20-21

吾豈可復居此位顧左右取馬徑歸遂不起前是左僕射賈耽以疾歸第未起
珣瑜又繼去二相皆天下重望相次歸卧叔文執誼等益無所顧忌遠近大懼
焉¹⁷⁶

In this account, the manipulation of power by Wang Shuwen and his disregard for proper etiquette is clearly portrayed in a negative light. However, the exasperated resignation of Zheng Xunyu is depicted somewhat ambivalently. Compared to Du You and Gao Ying, who are too frightened to dare to protest, his frustration seems justified, yet it is also rather reckless, since he and Jia Dan, who had also resigned in protest, were the great hope for the empire, and in resigning cleared the way for Wang Shuwen and Wei Zhiyi to amass power at court. In the *Tang Mirror*, although the account of events is nearly identical, Zheng Xunyu is extolled as a Confucian hero by Fan Zuyu. The *Tang Mirror* critique is as follows:

Your servant Zuyu says: Confucius said: One who conducts himself with shame can be called noble.¹⁷⁷ Mencius said: A man may not be without shame...The sense of shame is to a man of great importance.¹⁷⁸ Jia Dan and Zheng Xunyu knew it was unacceptable when petty men managed affairs to do a mediocre job as minister without effect. Claiming illness they resigned. That is knowing shame. How could it be [claimed] that there is no difference between them and Du You or Gao Ying?

臣祖禹曰孔子曰行己有恥可謂士矣孟子曰人不可以無耻耻之於人大矣賈耽鄭珣瑜當小人用事而為相碌碌無補知其不可引疾而去能知耻矣方之杜佑高郢豈不有間哉¹⁷⁹

In his account, Fan Zuyu quotes two excerpts from the *Veritable Records* word

¹⁷⁶ SKQS Dong ya tang chang li ji zhu, wai ji zhu 7: 5-6

¹⁷⁷ Analects, ch. 13

¹⁷⁸ Menius Book 7 Part 1 Chapters 6-7, see Legge pp. 451-2

¹⁷⁹ SKQS Tang jian 17: 1-2

for word. He omits details of the promotions of other characters and the edict of Emperor Shunzong relating to these promotions, but these details are extraneous to the event of Zheng Xunyu's resignation, so that their omission does not affect the narrative of this event. In his commentary on the events, however, he unequivocally exalts the actions of Zheng Xunyu, as well as Jia Dan, and harshly disparages Du You and Gao Ying for remaining at court despite the corruption of Wang Shuwen and Wei Zhiyi. In comparing Fan's account to the way that this material is dealt with in the *Old Tang History* and the *New Tang History*, it becomes clear that the resignations of Zheng Xunyu and Jia Dan were a point of contention among historians and politicians at the time when the events took place, and continued to be hotly contested into the Song period.

In the *Old Tang History*, little mention is made of Zheng Xunyu. He is not given a biography in the *Old Tang History*, and his resignation is little more than a footnote in the biography of Gao Ying.

[When Gao Ying] along with Zheng Xunyu were serving as ministers, before long Dezong passed away. At the same time in the position of minister, Du You had for a long time occupied a high post, and Wei Zhiyi controlled power through his faction. Shunzong had a stroke. As his affliction was severe he could not make pronouncements on important affairs of state. Wang Shuwen through the Han Lin Academy gained Attendant Gentleman at the Ministry of Revenue and served as Assistant Commissioner of the Department of Revenue. At that time in the governing of affairs Wang Shuwen plotted, Wang Pei communicated it, Li Zhongyan proclaimed it, and Wei Zhiyi put it into effect. From the time Xunyu received office his consternation appeared in his face. Because [Shuwen's] influence could not be stopped at this point, he claimed to be sick and unable to get out of bed. Ying continued the routine without uttering a complaint, until he was dismissed. Everyone at the time judged the former to be excellent and the latter to be inferior.

與鄭珣瑜並命拜相未幾德宗昇遐時同在相位杜佑以宿舊居上而韋執誼由朋黨專柄順宗風恙方甚樞機不宣而王叔文以翰林學士兼戶部侍郎充度支副使是時政事王叔文謀議王伾通導李忠言宣下韋執誼奉行珣瑜自受命憂形顏色至是以勢不可奪因稱疾不起郢則因循竟無所發以至於罷物論定此為優劣焉¹⁸⁰

The *Old Tang History* makes note that critics at the time admired Zheng Xunyu for resigning and disparaged Gao Ying for continuing in his position without objecting to Wang Shuwen's abuse of power, but does not take a strong stance either way, or afford Zheng Xunyu a biography of his own.

The *New Tang History*, on the other hand, does give him his own biography which largely centers on the event of his resignation; however, it then proceeds to discount the importance of his resignation. In the *New Tang History* the event is narrated as follows:

Shunzong ascended the throne he was promoted to the Ministry of Personnel.¹⁸¹ Wang Shuwen promoted prefectural clerks to Han Lin Academicians and Assistant Commissioners of the Salt and Iron Monopoly¹⁸² Within the palace he made connections with the castrati, and manipulated and corrupted the government. Wei Zhiyi was chief minister, and put his policies in effect on the outside. Shuwen one day came to the Secretariat to see Zhiyi, and the attendant informed him, “When the chief ministers are eating, none of the officials may see him.” Shuwen was angry, cursed him, and the attendant went in and informed him. Zhiyi arose and went to his [chambers] to speak with Shuwen. Xunyu with Du You and Gao Ying put down their chopsticks and waited. After a while, the attendant informed them, “The two gentleman are eating together.” Xunyu sighed and said, “How can I continue in this position!” He ordered his men to fetch his horse and went home, and didn't come out for seven days, and resigned from the Ministry of Personnel.

¹⁸⁰ SKQS Jiu Tang shu 147:6; see also Ce fu yuan gui 335: 12-13

¹⁸¹ See Hucker, p. 306 entry 3630 for a detailed history of the Ministry of Personnel in imperial China

¹⁸² According to Hucker, p. 36, iron was not a state monopoly in Tang times, only salt was controlled by the government, but iron was retained in the name as an anachronism in imitation of the Han institution upon which it was based.

He soon became ill and after several months he died at the age of 68. He was bestowed with the honorary title of Left Vice Director of the Imperial Secretariat.

順宗立即遷吏部尚書王叔文起州吏為翰林學士鹽鐵副使內交奄人攘撓政機韋執誼為宰相居外奉行叔文一日至中書見執誼直吏白方宰相會食百官無見者叔文恚叱吏吏走入白執誼起就閣與叔文語珣瑜與杜佑高郢輟餐以待頃之吏白二公同飯矣珣瑜喟曰吾可復居此乎命左右取馬歸卧家不出七日罷為吏部尚書亦會有疾數月卒年六十八贈尚書左僕射太常博士徐復諡文獻兵部侍郎李巽言文者經緯天地用二諡非春秋之正請更議復謂二諡周漢以來有之威烈慎靜周也文終文成漢也況珣瑜名臣二諡不嫌巽曰諡一正也堯舜是也二諡非古也法所不載詔從復議¹⁸³

In this account the events, though rewritten, have undergone little revision in content. The fact that Zheng Xunyu is given a biography of his own recognizes his importance in a way that the *Old Tang History* does not. Yet when it comes to the critique at the end of this chapter of the *New Tang History* it is clear that the text does not share Fan Zuyu's high estimation of Zheng's resignation, and in fact, it may be the analysis of the *New Tang History* to which Fan is objecting in his account.

The critique says: Wang Shuwen although he had connections with the old ladies in charge on the inside, on the outside he relied on slanderers in order to take control of the empire, yet at that time the prince had already grown up and at court there were none who suspected his faults, if Xunyu, Ying and Du You had staunchly led the Eastern Palace¹⁸⁴ in overseeing the country and had caught and expelled Shuwen and his cohort, it would not have taken much strength. But they continued following convention without saying a word content with their own pay, can this be called one who should be employed as a minister?¹⁸⁵ Xunyu was so angry he immediately went into reclusion, while Ying and You held to their positions, neither of these are sufficient approaches to being a minister, one is no better than the other.

¹⁸³ SKQS Xin Tang shu 165:8-9

¹⁸⁴ A formal term for the crown prince, who resided in the Eastern Palace

¹⁸⁵ A reference to the Analects ch. 16 季氏

贊曰王叔文雖內連姘尹外倚姦固以攘天權然是時太子已長朝無嫌罅若
珣瑜郢與杜佑等毅然引東宮監國執退叔文輩其力不難顧循嘿苟安所謂
焉用彼相者矣珣瑜一忿卧第與郢佑固位二者亦不足相輕重云¹⁸⁶

Here it is apparent that not only does the degree of inclusion in the historical narrative evolve from the *Old Tang History* to the *New Tang History* to the *Tang Mirror*, the reasons for this development are spelled out in the historians' critiques.

By looking beyond the narration of the events themselves and considering the authors' critiques, it is possible to draw on additional sources from the Northern Song genre of historical criticism, books which consist entirely of moral lessons to be learned from the events of the past without including the narration of the events themselves. In addition, I draw on memorials, prefaces, inscriptions and letters relating to the authors and their works to identify the issues which were most prominent in the minds of the authors and their contemporaries.

In examining this material I conclude that the main concerns of the Song historians were with the following issues: the archetypal minister and his relationship with the dynasty; the importance of an orderly succession of the throne, and the right of ministers to intervene in the family life of the emperor to ensure political stability; the method and role of history itself in political institutions, and a few incidents which seem to me to be specifically directed against the New Policies implemented by Wang Anshi.

Other scholars have done similar work on other bodies of texts from the

¹⁸⁶ SKQS Xin Tang shu 165:19

period to identify such political biases, and my research corroborates some of their findings. As outlined in the section titled Secondary Research in Chapter 1 above, most of this research has focused on Ouyang Xiu's *New History of the Five Dynasties* and on Sima Guang's *Comprehensive Mirror for Aid in Government*. However, Kurz's discovery that attributions of factionalism are increasingly written into the record over the course of the 11th century, as well as Ari Levine's research on factional theory in the late Northern Song, are corroborated by comparisons of texts about Tang history. The findings of Naomi Standen, on changing notions of loyalty, and those of Richard Davis, on changing models for exemplary women, have also informed my research.

Many of the issues addressed by these scholars also are apparent in the historical criticisms of Fan Zuyu and Sun Fu. For example, Ari Levine notes that many Song authors who contributed to the 11th century discourse on factionalism did so by historical analogism to the events of Tang Emperor Xuanzong 宣宗.

Similarly, Fan Zuyu also offers the following critique:

Your servant Zuyu says: Pei Du 裴度 being chief minister for Xianzong 憲宗, Li Deyu 李德裕 being chief minister for Wuzong 武宗, they both had illustrious achievements. They are considered sage ministers of the Tang. After the Dazhong 大中 period, there were none able to succeed them. Deyu's skills were superior to Du's, and yet his virtue and generosity were not of the same extent. Du was partial towards petty men, there was nothing he wouldn't do. He was dangerous to an extreme and yet he was able to maintain his high reputation his whole life. Deyu as soon as he lost influence was banished to death at sea. How so? The reason is that Du did not form factions, Deyu formed factions. Looking at it from the present, the faction of Niu Sengru 牛僧儒 and Li Zongmin 李宗閔 mostly consisted of petty men, the faction of Deyu consisted mostly of noble men. Yet damaging the public good because of private interests, and using influence in order to take revenge, are

one and the same. Only an official of Heaven can invade Yan. Deyu formed a faction himself, and wanted to destroy factions. This is using Yan to invade Yan.¹⁸⁷ Confucius said: “When the love of superiority, boasting, resentments, and covetousness are repressed, this may be regarded as the achievement of what is difficult.”¹⁸⁸ He also said: “The noble man is reserved and does not contend, and joins groups without making factions.” Deyu expressed his love of superiority, boasting, resentments, and covetousness. He was reserved and contentious, joined groups and formed factions. How could he avoid [his downfall]?

臣祖禹曰裴度之相憲宗李德裕之相武宗皆有功烈為唐賢相大中以後無能繼之者德裕才優於度而德器不及也度為小人所傾無所不至危亦極矣而能以功名終德裕一失勢斥死海上何哉度不為黨德裕為黨故也自今觀之牛僧孺李宗閔之黨多小人德裕之黨多君子然因私以害公挾勢以報怨則一也夫惟天吏可以伐燕德裕自為朋黨而欲破朋黨此以燕伐燕也孔子曰克伐怨欲不行焉可以為難矣又曰君子矜而不爭群而不黨德裕克伐怨欲必行焉矜而爭群而黨其能免乎¹⁸⁹

As this passage illustrates, the critiques found in the Tang Mirror and in the Discussions and Judgments on Tang History corroborate the research of Ari Levine and of Johannes Kurz on developments in factionalism and faction theory as political concerns during the 11th century. Similarly, other examples examined below support many of the conclusions of Standen and Davis in their research on the History of the Five Dynasties.

The methodology used here, however, differs somewhat from that used in these other studies. Instead of selecting particular issues to analyze, I have focused on those issues which seem to have been most contentious among Song authors themselves in writing the history of the Tang.

¹⁸⁷ [this seems to be a reference to Mencius?]

¹⁸⁸ Confucian Analects, Book 14 ch. 1-2, translated by Legge: 'When the love of superiority, boasting, resentments, and covetousness are repressed, this may be deemed perfect virtue. The Master said, 'This may be regarded as the achievement of what is difficult. But I do not know that it can be deemed perfect virtue.' p. 276

¹⁸⁹ SKQS Tang jian 21.1-2

Examining such materials as letters, prefaces and memorials relating to these historical criticisms, as well as passages within the text that explicitly refer to other histories of the Tang, may reveal the issues and events that were of most concern to the Song historians themselves. In other words, in contesting and revising the history of the Tang, what were the most controversial or debated points in the Tang historical narrative?

Evidence examined from this perspective reveals two major patterns: first, the historians tended to discuss Tang history in terms of particular incidents framed in terms of specific personalities. Song authors certainly could and did write in terms of abstract issues or principles, as Levine's extensive analysis of the *Pengdang lun* 朋黨論 (Discourse on Factions) genre has amply demonstrated. However, in Song discourse regarding Tang history, they mostly argued in terms of the treatment of specific events, described in terms of the main characters who participated in the event. While these events and characters served as archetypes who implicitly represented certain principles or ideals, the debates among Song literati were conducted in terms of how to evaluate specific people and their historical roles.

Secondly, the people evaluated in these debates were almost entirely high-ranking ministers at court. Song authors depicted the chief ministers as almost entirely responsible for the successes and failures of the Tang government, with the imperial institution either interfering or not interfering with the implementation of their policies. The effects of the emperor on government and society were usually depicted as an indirect influence mediated by the

appointment and dismissal of good or evil ministers, rather than as any direct result of the emperors actions or ideas. At the same time, the archetypal good minister is often described as such based on his ability to obtain respect and deference from the emperor, either in spite of or because of a blatant disregard for compliance with his wishes. Furthermore in many instances these archetypal ministers are themselves historians who employ the historical record as a check on imperial power. I will argue that this depiction of historical reality served the interests of the authors themselves and the literati class who read their texts by trying to persuade the Emperors and Empress Dowagers of the Song dynasty to defer to them and to limit their own power and involvement in government.

This use of history to promote the position of the scholar-officials as advisers and mentors to the imperial rulers is perhaps most apparent in Fan Zuyu's memorial submitting his book, the *Tang Mirror*, to the throne. The text of this memorial is as follows:

Your servant Zuyu says:

I your humble servant taking from ancient times the subordinate's warnings to his superior, the minister's warnings to his noble, must use the past to analyze the present and use what came before to indicate what will come after. Thus when Yu and Yi were under Shun, they told him not to find comfort in pleasure¹⁹⁰, and to guard against haughty oppression before it has come to be.¹⁹¹ Thus Duke Shao told King Cheng of Zhou, examining the men of antiquity,

¹⁹⁰ This alludes to the Counsels of the Great Yu from the Book of Documents. "Don not fail in due attention to the laws and ordinances. Do not find your enjoyment in indulgent ease. Do not go to excess in pleasure. In your employment of men of worth, let none come between you and them...." Legge, p. 55

¹⁹¹ This alludes to Yi and ?? in the Book of Documents. "Do not be like the haughty Zhu of Dan, who found his pleasure only in indolence and dissipation, and pursued a proud oppression. Day and night, without ceasing, he was thus. He would make boats go where there was no water. He introduced licentious associates into his family. The consequence was that he brought the honours of his House to an end." Legge p. 84

after so many years, the mandate could no longer continue.¹⁹²

The days arrayed before us are all that by which to advance sagacious virtue and to nourish worthy accomplishment. Your servant Zuyu sincerely bowed his head, sincerely fearing bows his head. I, your servant, formerly at the preceding court poorly oversaw the imperial library. What I actually comprehended was the Tang. In the process of editing and collecting, I searched for the traces of [Tang's] successes and failures, and judged them according to righteous principles, composing a book, thinking to present it for the various people to speak about and the hundreds of artisans to dispute¹⁹³.

Displaying to the former Emperor a small bit of my work, I was sent to my post; unfortunately the former Emperor was suddenly brought to the end of his time. Prostrating to meet the august Emperor, I continue to be employed as he accedes to the great reign, profound learning and wisdom daily ascending, seeking and recruiting old classicists to explain and nurture the sage scholarship.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹² This alludes to The Announcement of the Duke of Shao in the Book of Documents. “Examining the men of antiquity, there was the founder of the Han dynasty. Heaven guided his mind, allowed his descendants to succeed him, and protected him. He acquainted himself with Heaven, and was obedient.--But in process of time the decree in his favor fell to the ground. So also when we examine the case of Yin. Heaven guided its founder, so that he corrected the errors of Shang, and it protected his descendants. He also acquainted himself with Heaven, and was obedient.--But now the decree in favor of him has fallen to the ground. Our king has now come to the throne in his youth :-- let him not slight the aged and experienced, for it may be said of them that they have studied the virtuous conduct of our ancient worthies, and still more, that they have matured their plans in the light of Heaven.” Legge p. 427, and “We should be all means survey the dynasties of Xia and Yin. I do not presume to know and say, 'The dynasty of Xia was to enjoy the favoring decree of Heaven for so many years,' nor do I presume to know and say, 'It could not continue longer.' The fact was simply that, for want of the virtue of reverence, the decree in its favour prematurely fell to the ground. Similarly, I do not presume to know and say, 'The dynasty of Yin was to enjoy the favouring decree of Heaven for so many years,' nor do I presume to say, 'It could not continue any longer.' The fact simply was that, for want of the virtue of reverence, the decree in its favor prematurely fell to the ground. The king has now inherited the decree, --the same decree, I consider, which belonged to those two dynasties. Let him seek to inherit the virtues of their meritorious sovereigns;--especially at the commencement of his duties. Oh! It is as on the birth of a son, when all depends on the training of his early life, through which he secures his wisdom in the future, as if it were decreed to him. Now Heaven may have decreed wisdom to our king; it may have decreed good fortune or bad; it may have decreed a long course of years :--we only know that now is with him the commencement of his duties.”

¹⁹³ See Legge pp. 164-5 The Punitive Expedition of Yin “Every year in the first month of spring, the herald with the wooden-tongued bell goes along the roads, proclaiming, 'Ye officers able to direct, be prepared with your admonitions. Ye workmen engaged in mechanical affairs, remonstrate on the subject of your business! If any of you disrespectfully neglect this requirement, the country has regular punishments for you.’” see following pages as well, and search Zuo zhuan

¹⁹⁴ This is a reference to the Book of Documents, see Legge, p. 252 Shoo King Yue Ming, the King charges Yue saying “Open your mind, and enrich my mind”

In being admonished by former generations¹⁹⁵ [Tang Taizong see Tang shu Chu Suilang zhuan] none are more fitting than the Tang. Ordering the ceremonies, punishments, clans and ancestral halls, then the four directions carry on the system and ten thousand generations eternally rely on it.¹⁹⁶

This book of your servant's, although not sufficient to send forth and broadcast the accomplishment of virtue or broadly assist in the enlightenment of intelligence, holding fast to loyalty I'm not able to stop myself, for if there is something to be gotten from it I do not dare not to declare it; in that case taking the dirt of my haughty foolishness and staining the sun and the moon is a crime punishable by death. Prostrating myself only for the ease of your pure leisure, I meagerly present for your examination and inspection these twelve *juan* of my "Tang Mirror" transcribed into 6 *ce*. Conveying it respectfully along with this memorial to your Highness. Your servant Zuyu sincerely awed bows his head, sincerely fearing bows his head with cautious words.

18th day of the second month of the first year of the Yuanyou reign period 1086

In this text, although the author is extremely deferential and submissive, as is appropriate in a memorial to the throne, he is in fact making a claim for the young Emperor Zhezong and the Empress Dowager Gao to submit to the guidance proffered by the scholar officials based on historical precedent. Both in the title of the book, the *Tang Mirror*, and in the explicit comparison he makes between himself and the early Tang historian Chu Suiliang, who refused to allow Tang Taizong to influence his recording of Tang history for posterity, Fan Zuyu is making a claim for the power and authority of historians independent of their

¹⁹⁵ 帝曰，朕行有三：一監前代成敗以為元龜，二進善人其成政道，三斥遠羣小不受讒言。朕能守而勿失亦欲史氏不能書吾惡也。 New Tang History

¹⁹⁶ Legge, Shoo King Da Yu Mo p. 57 "The emperor said, "Yes. The earth is now reduced to order, and the influences of heaven operate with effect; those six magazines and three businesses are all truly regulated, so that a myriad generations may perpetually depend on them:--this is your merit." See also Odes Zhou song

imperial patrons.

The political value of history among Song politicians is also apparent in the preface to the *Discussions and Judgments on Tang History*. The preface written by Sima Guang to Sun Fu's *Discussions and Judgments on Tang History* illustrates the way in which Tang history was deployed in Song politics.

Formerly Sun Gong wrote this book, deeply he valued it with inordinate esteem. He sealed his manuscript in a bamboo box as if he must wash his hands of it. Afterward he explained to his family members saying: “No matter what if there is a calamity-- water, fire, soldiers or knives-- other goods and assets completely abandon, this bamboo box cannot be lost.”

Whenever he had a moment's free time at work or at home, he would add to it and subtract from it, editing and changing; it never once left his hand. When he was Fiscal Commissioner in Jian Dong, he went out to [survey the territory] and took it with him. Whenever he came to a pavilion designated for a rest stop, he pulled it out and edited it.

When there was an emergency in Yi zhou, he mounted a swift horse and immediately went without sparing a moment, charging ahead the whole trip. Upon completing the trip the great Jin Ling (golden mausoleum) fire had spread to the public office quarters. His younger brother's son Cha Qin bearing his bamboo box evacuated to an island in the lake. [Sun] Gong heard about it in Yi zhou and urgently returned, entering the door and asking, saying: “Is the Tang history here?” Cha replied saying: “Its here.” He was so pleased he had nothing else to ask. From the prime of his life until his old age he completed it without ever showing it to another person. When Wen Lu Gong [Wen Yanbo] controlled the government he urged [Sun] Gong to lend it to him. [Sun] Gong did not give it, only copying his discussions of Wei Zheng, Yao Chong and Song Jing to give to him, not to mention the other people whom he firmly would not allow to see it. In the second year of Yuan Feng (1079), Cha came to Luoyang from Yangzhai with the book to present to Guang [me] saying, “The aspirations of my uncle's whole life are collected in this book. The court formerly took it and kept it in the forbidden city. Now it has been confiscated for more than 20 years, and my family's Way has greatly declined. I greatly fear that this book will be scattered and lost, and not transmitted among men. Thus I copied it and present

it to you.” Formerly [I] Guang had heard that [Sun] Gong had this book and firmly desired to see it but was unable to obtain it. Obtaining it with surprised pleasure [I] said: “Bestowing me with gold would not equal this; is there nothing by which I can repay you?” “Please accept it and hide it, and when you encounter like-minded good men then pass it on [to them]. Perhaps another day it can be widely proclaimed throughout the world, causing [Sun] Gong's virtuous achievement to blaze brightly for all eternity. This is almost sufficient as a slight repayment, isn't it?” Written by Sima Guang after the winter in the 5th month at Qishui.

司馬溫公題跋

孫公昔著此書甚自重惜常別緘其藁於笥必盥手然後啟之謂家人曰萬一有水火兵刃之患他財貨盡棄之此笥不可失也每公私少間則增損改易未嘗去手其在江東為轉運使出行部亦以自隨過亭傳休止輒取修之宣州有急變乘驛遽往不暇挈以俱行既行後金陵大火及轉運廨舍弟之子察親負其笥避於沼中島上公在宣州聞之亟還入門問曰唐史在乎察對曰在乃悅餘無所問自壯年至於白首及成亦未嘗示人文潞公執政嘗從公借之公不與但錄魏徵姚崇宋璟論以與之況他人固不得而見也元豐二載察自陽翟來洛陽以書授光曰伯父平生之志萃於此書朝廷先嘗取之留禁中不出今沒二十餘年家道益衰大懼此書散逸不傳於人故錄以授子光昔聞公有是書固願見而未之得得之驚喜曰子貺我兼金不如顧無以為報請受而藏之遇同好則傳之異日或廣布於天下使公之德業煒燁於千古庶幾亦足以少報乎時冬至後五日涑水司馬光書

This preface reveals a number of elements of the idea of history among Song literati. First of all, history was clearly considered politically relevant and potentially dangerous. Secondly, in describing the encounter between Sun Fu and Wen Yanbo, Sima Guang is aligning the Discussions and Judgments with the opposition to Wang Anshi. Wen Yanbo was one of the last politicians opposed to Wang Anshi's New Policies to remain at court when Wang held sway. The fact that Sun was so guarded with his history emphasizes the importance the political opposition placed on the historical record as a tool for restricting imperial power. Emphasizing that the book had been confiscated in the forbidden city throughout the 1060s and 1070s, and the exhortation to keep it hidden and share it only with

like-minded good men also function to connect the text to the partisan politics of the time in which it was written. Perhaps most importantly, it draws attention to the Tang ministers Wei Zheng, Yao Chong and Song Jing as most politically relevant to Song dynasty literati. The implication here is that just as Yao Chong and Song Jing were able to serve admirably despite being employed by Empress Wu, Wen Yanbo ought to be able to maintain their commitment to justice despite the abuses of power by Wang Anshi under Emperor Shenzong.

The fascination with these Tang ministers among Song historians and politicians is apparent in other texts of the time besides this anecdote in Sima Guang's preface to the Discussions and Judgments on Tang History. The main concerns of the Song historians are with the orderly succession of dynastic power, the self-limitation of the imperial prerogative in general and the influence of female members of the imperial household in particular, the beneficial influence of wise ministers delegated with authority by humble emperors, and the political value of historiography. All of these concerns are aspects of the larger issue of how the Zhenguan and Kaiyuan eras of such great peace and prosperity were brought about from such inauspicious circumstances.

Neither Taizong who reigned during the Zhenguan era, nor Xuanzong who reigned during the Kaiyuan era came to the throne by virtue of being the oldest son of the preceding emperor. Taizong murdered his brothers and forced his father to abdicate. Xuanzong gained power after a prolonged period in which the Empress Wu Zetian and the Taiping Princess held *de facto* power at court. Xuanzong was not the eldest son, although his older brother did defer to him to

be named as the heir apparent.

This is a problem for Song historians. In theory, the peace and prosperity of the Zhenguan and Kaiyuan eras should be the result of the moral influence of a monarch who accedes to the throne peacefully, not the result of the political skill of a monarch who grabs the throne in a military coup. The Kaiyuan era was preceded by a period in which imperial women, most notably Wu Zetian, controlled the court. That one of the high points of Chinese history could emerge out of such a situation posed a challenge to traditional Chinese political theory. The solution implied by Song historians is that the actual cause of these reigns of peace was not the imperial ruler, but the chancellors who served at the time. It is these archetypal ministers who deserved most of the credit, with Emperor Taizong and Emperor Xuanzong receiving credit mainly for their ability to accept criticism, practice self-restraint and delegate to these sage ministers. The exhortations against restraint of the female members of the imperial family were in particular directed towards the influential Princesses and Empress Dowagers of the Northern Song period.¹⁹⁷

Much like during the period leading up to Xuanzong's reign in the Tang, during the 11th century there was also a growing presence of politically involved women, specifically Empress Dowager Liu (reigned as regent 1022-1033) and Empress Gao. Although Empress Dowager Liu remained in the position of regent for the Emperor Renzong when he acceded to the throne as a minor, and she did

¹⁹⁷ On the role of women at court in the Northern Song, see John Chaffee "The Rise and Regency of Empress Liu (969-1033)," *Journal of Sung-Yuan Studies* 31 (2001), pp. 1-25; Priscilla Ching-Chung, *Political Power and Social Prestige of Palace Women in the Northern Sung (960-1126)* University of Pennsylvania dissertation, 1977.

not usurp the title of Emperor outright as Wu Zetian had done, there were clear parallels between the two women, which Empress Dowager Liu herself seemed to encourage to a certain point. She is the only woman in Chinese history to perform sacrifices wearing the imperial dress of an emperor other than Wu Zetian¹⁹⁸. She once asked the scholar-officials at court about the reign of Empress Wu Zetian, presumably to draw upon her as a model for female rule, only to be shot down by Lu Zongdao who characterized Wu Zetian as a criminal usurper.¹⁹⁹ The scholar-officials were quick to impose limits on Empress Dowager Liu's ambitions. In fact the leader of the Qingli reformers, Fan Zhongyan, first came to prominence memorializing that it was time for Empress Dowager Liu to relinquish rule to Renzong himself.²⁰⁰ She seems to have gotten the message that she should not associate herself too closely with Wu Zetian, as she vehemently refused a portrait of Wu Zetian Serving as Regent presented to her by a sycophant.²⁰¹ However, she never agreed to relinquish her position as regent and allow Renzong to accede to the throne, continuing to rule until her death and even leaving a posthumous decree that Dowager Consort Yang continue the regency in her place. This decree, however, was not recognized, and upon her death Renzong acceded to the throne at the age of 23.²⁰²

Dowager Empress Liu's influence, with its parallels to the career of Wu Zetian, was certainly in the minds of the Song era reformers who authored

¹⁹⁸ CHC Song p. 289, citing HCP (1979) 112, p. 2605

¹⁹⁹ CHC Song p. 286

²⁰⁰ CHC Song p. 287

²⁰¹ CHC Song p. 289; Ch'ang et al., *Sung-jen chuan-chi tzu-liao so-yin*, pp. 3011–102; Ch'en et al., *Sung-shih chi-shih pen-mo* 24, p. 190.

²⁰² CHC Song p. 289; HCP (1979) pp. 2609-2613

histories of the Tang dynasty. However, the accession of Renzong did not put an end to issues of imperial succession during the 11th century. First of all, unbeknownst to Renzong until after her death, Dowager Empress Liu had not actually been his biological mother. Secondly, Renzong's successor was an adopted heir who reigned as Yingzong 英宗(r. 1063-1067). Most of the reign of Yingzong was dominated by ritual questions regarding his relationship to his biological and adoptive fathers.

Emperor Yingzong was not the biological son of Renzong, but the son of his cousin, the Prince of Pu. At the heart of the controversy was the question of how Yingzong was to address the spirits of his adoptive and his biological fathers in conducting rituals. Carney Fisher has expertly analyzed this issue and its implications in her article, "The Ritual Dispute of Sung Ying-tsung." As he rightly notes, the intensity of the debate generated by a seemingly scholastic issue of protocol is not easily transposed from the 11th century to the 20th century. Its full significance in the minds of the disputants is, to a certain extent, lost on the modern reader.²⁰³ Rather than attempting to assess the validity of the controversy or to decide which faction was in the right (questions which the Song literati themselves were never able to resolve), Fisher argues correctly that analyzing the stances taken in the dispute can reveal aspects of the intellectual climate of the 11th century. In doing so he concludes that this debate over the Prince of Pu

...was an argument over scholastic issues fought in the political arena. ...At issue were correct designations and ceremonial usages

²⁰³ Carney T. Fisher, "The Ritual Dispute of Sung Ying-tsung," *Papers in Far Eastern History* pp. 109-138

and the proper treatment of one's dead forebears – a vital concern in the moral ethos of Song China. In its later stages when these ritual proprieties had more or less been settled upon, the rights and privileges of censorial officials became the main matter in dispute.

It is this second phase of the debate, over the role of censors in imperial government, that is especially interesting and relevant to the composition of history at the time. In fact this debate pitted Ouyang Xiu against Sima Guang on the issue of whether or not censors could be forcibly removed from office for protesting imperial decisions.

The reasons for such interest in the ministers Yao Chong and Song Jing among Northern Song historians is perhaps best explained by Song Qi's critique at the end of the combined biography of Yao and Song in the *Old Tang History*:

This historian says: When undergoing difficulty and danger it is easy to recognize a fine servant, in positions of safety and stability it is difficult to clearly know a wise minister. Thus Fang [Xuanling] and Du [Ruhui] led the accomplishment of establishing the dynasty, and Yao [Chong] and Song [Jing] experienced [the reigns of] the two empresses Wu and Wei, with disordered government and corrupted punishments, and they waded through and tread in the midst of it, overcoming and preserving their reputations, restrained and without shame.

The Praise says: Yao, Song were taken in at court, punishment and governance were extremely upright. Working for governance was not easy, restricting punishments was even more difficult. They remonstrated and contended vigorously, bestowing leniency and openness, without their Way, how could there have been peace?

This argument emphasizes that Yao and Song, rather than the imperial rulers, provided the stability and order that eventually led to the great peace of the Kaiyuan period (713-741). Notice that the argument here is not that these chancellors provided good government in cooperation with the the imperial

rulers, but rather in spite of them. When these two ministers first came into power, imperial control was in the hands of Empress Wu, who not only controlled the court as Empress Dowager but went on to declare herself emperor and declare her own Zhou 周 dynasty. It was through the selfless dedication of ministers such as Yao and Chong, who would not compromise their principles for personal gain, that the dynasty was brought back on track, despite the interference of Empress Wei and the Taiping Princess in the rocky succession disputes that followed Empress Wu's demise. In fact, in the *Discussions and Judgments on Tang History*, the author goes so far as to imply that the person of the imperial ruler was virtually irrelevant to the success of the dynasty: even a ruler as corrupt as Empress Wu could not prevent the achievement of peace and prosperity if there are wise ministers managing policy. In discussing Yao Chong and his colleagues Di Renjie and Zhang Jianzhi who served under Empress Wu, Sun Fu writes:

Di Renjie recommends Zhang Jianzhi to be prime minister

The discussion says: By observing Wu Hou's employment of Zhang Jianzhi, one can see her skill in deputing sages. The people employed during the more than twenty years when Wu Hou attended court and usurped authority were half licentious and half upright. Perhaps the Empress' refined and wise nature surpassed that of others: claiming to not employ the licentious, and by their absence establish herself; desiring to not employ the sagacious, and by their absence sheltering herself. As a result, of those holding great authority many were wise and talented. For example, Di Renjie and Yao Yuanchong as chief ministers in the interior, Lou Shide, Guo Yuanzhen as generals on the frontier. How could there be any concern about the affairs of All Under Heaven? Thus, despite [her] savage and cruel unorthodoxy, its not reaching the point of disaster and failure was due to those [ministers]. When Renjie and Chong were ministers of state (*xiangguo*), there were

insufficient officials capable of planning at the time, so she diligently inquired of the two ministers to seek out great talent to be prepared for employment. The two ministers strongly recommended Jianzhi. She immediately ordered him to be a minister. She trusted without doubt like this and admired him. Her intentions in hiring people can be known by this. Was she not talented at obtaining and employing sages? A woman usurps the great name of the Empire, behaves without restraint and with extreme cruelty, yet still bestows great power on such people, and for a long time there is not disaster or failure. If one who acts as the ruler of the people is able to promote the sincere and employ the wise, then what could there be to fear or suffer in All Under Heaven?

狄仁傑薦張柬之為相

論曰觀武后用張柬之見其任賢之術也武后臨朝僭二十餘年所用之人姦正相半蓋后俊智之性有過於人謂不用姦人無以成己欲不用賢人無以庇己過然持大權者多賢才也如狄仁傑姚元崇相於內婁師德郭元振將於外天下事何慮乎故雖兇殘不道不至禍敗者以此也當仁傑崇相國才謀之士不足於時尚孜孜訪於二相求大才以備任用二相力薦柬之立命作相其推心不疑如此則向之任用之意可知矣豈非得任賢之術也一婦僭天下大號恣行幾虐尚以大權付得其人久不禍敗為人君者能推誠任賢天下豈有憂患乎

The position taken by Sun Fu here is more extreme than many Song scholars were willing to accept. In fact, the issue of Zhang Jianzhi's promotion is a disputed one in the official histories. In Zhang's biography in the *Old Tang History*, Empress Wu does in fact promote Zhang Jianzhi soon after he is recommended by Yao Chong and Di Renjie. In the *New History* these events are edited so that Empress Wu in fact delays and avoids promoting him for quite some time. Although the reasons for this change in the accounts cannot be known for certain, there is a distinct possibility that it was done for the purpose of undermining any potential praise, however slight, of Empress Wu's abilities as a ruler that were circulating at the time.

This is not to imply that Sun Fu approved of Empress Wu's reign. In fact,

the irony of this situation is that in demonstrating a certain degree of political skill in promoting wise and able ministers she brought about her own downfall, since it was in fact Zhang Jianzhi who led the charge to depose Empress Wu and restore the Tang throne to her son, Emperor Zhongzong 中宗 (reigned 684, 705-710). In his discussion of this event, Sun Fu argues that the *Old Tang History* should be more explicit in its condemnation of Empress Wu's reign:

Deposing Empress Wu

The discussion says: The Old Tang History writes that Empress Wu transferred the throne to Zhongzong, why do the historian officials avoid the truth? Then in Huan Yanfan's biography it is written that Wu Sansi was constantly deeply angry at Yanfan and the others for deposing Empress Wu, and again in the Veritable Records of Empress Wu it is written that Yanfan requested that the Empress Dowager return to her bedchamber and no longer speak of official matters. This in truth was deposing her. Now in order to leave a trace of the truth of the matter, I write that Jianzhi, Yanfan and the others thereupon deposed Empress Wu in order to illuminate the great model. The realm of Tang was the realm of Gaozu and Taizong. Gaozong acceded to the throne according to the royal lineage. When it came to his nearing death, he entrusted his son to the Empress Dowager, and the Empress Dowager arrogated great power and extorted and robbed his position, usurping and pilfering the dynastic title. Wanton behavior and evil poison flowed within and without for more than twenty years, reaching such extreme unorthodoxy. If in the end of her life no disaster occurred, how can this be a warning to those who come after? The actual situation is that she was deposed, how can it be tabooed? If the reason is that Zhongzong was empress Wu's son, and Yanfan and the others in elevating the son deposed the mother, which is not proper, then that is not a valid reason. In the Spring and Autumn Annals in the first year of Duke Zhuang it says: "In the third month, the [late duke's] wife retired to [Ts'e]." This was the mother of Duke Zhuang. Her surname is left out to condemn her for her rebellious and disorderly conduct. Here the method of the Spring and Autumn Annals can be seen. Empress Wu stole the throne of the ruler, changed the dynastic name of the Tang, was cruel in using power and unrestrained by the law, inflicting harm for many years -- how can she not be condemned? In writing that Empress Wu was deposed, one is getting rid of the dynastic title she usurped and the

great power that she arrogated and returning her to the position of Empress Dowager. Her being returned to the position of Empress Dowager is the method by which the lineage is restored, how is this not proper? Therefore it is using the method of the Spring and Autumn Annals to condemn criminals and hold them up as warnings for later generations.

廢武后

論曰舊唐史書武后傳位於中宗蓋史官諱其事也然桓彥範傳書武三思以武后為彥範等所廢常深憤怨又於武后實錄書彥範請太后復辟卧不語事是廢之為實今迹其實事書東之彥範等遂廢武后所以明大法也唐之天下高祖太宗之天下也高宗傳受於祖宗及其崩也以子託后后擅威權乃逼奪其位僭竊大號恣行兇惡毒流內外踰二十年不道至此若終身無禍何以作戒於後況實廢之安可諱也若以中宗武后之子也彥範等奉子而廢母於事不順是不達其理春秋莊公元年三月夫人孫於齊此莊公之母也以悖亂之事去其氏貶之則春秋之法可見矣武氏奪嗣君之位變唐國號凶威虐法為害歲久安得無所貶也況書廢武氏者廢其僭竊之號疆大之權復后之位爾復后位所以奉祖宗之法豈不順乎故用春秋之法為唐貶絕罪人且作戒於後也

As this passage makes explicit, the interregnum of Empress Wu's Zhou dynasty provided a historiographical dilemma for Song historians. The problem was, how to record the events of the period factually without lending any legitimacy to her years in power. The *New Tang History* draws attention to this predicament by including the years of Empress Wu's reign in the basic annals 本紀 section of the official history alongside the other Emperors, as the *Old Tang History*, but also giving her a biography in the chapters of biographies of Empresses and Imperial Consorts, to point out that that is her proper place, and referring to her as *Wu hou* 武后 (her title as Empress Dowager) rather than as *Wu zetian* 武則天, the posthumous name conferred on her as ruler of the empire. The *Tang Mirror* goes even further in its condemnation of her usurpation of power. Throughout the entire fifteen years of her reign, he continues to refer to the deposed Emperor as the actual ruler, and makes no use of any of Empress

Wu's reign era names in his chronology. Furthermore, while his book is primarily focused on his critiques of important events in Tang history, he does not make any comments on a single event that occurred while she was in power, and his critiques only resume once she has been overthrown and Zhongzong returned to power. What is most relevant to the discussion here however is that ministers such as Yao Chong and Song Jing whose early careers were under her government are not disparaged for this fact. They are nonetheless considered archetypal ministers of the Tang, because despite the fact that they served under the usurper, they dedicated themselves to the restoration of the glory of the Tang dynasty under Emperor Xuanzong 玄宗 (712-756). And in fact, it is Yao Chong, Song Jing, and their comrade Zhang Jiuling 張九齡 (673-740), not Xuanzong himself, who are given credit for the golden era of the Kaiyuan period, which was the first half of Xuanzong's reign (713-741). The second half of his reign, when these ministers were no longer in service, culminated in the military uprising of An Lushan in 755 and Emperor Xuanzong's flight into Sichuan province when the capital was defeated. Song historians make the argument that the groundwork for this eventual collapse was laid years earlier, when Xuanzong dismissed these wise ministers. Although this argument was developed by many historians and politicians of the Song dynasty, it was already proposed during the second half of the Tang dynasty itself by the official Cui Qun 崔羣 (772-832), according to the *Tang Mirror*:

In the 8th month the Emperor asked the chancellors: The government of Xuanzong was first orderly and later chaotic. Why so? Cui Qun responded saying: "Xuanzong employed Yao Chong,

Song Jing, Lu Huaishen, Su Ting, Han Xiu, Zhang Jiuling, then it was ordered. He employed Yuwen Rong, Li Linfu, and Yang Guozhong, then it was chaotic. Thus the connection between employing people and gains and losses is not a negligible one. Everyone takes it that the rebellion of An Lushan in the 14th year [755] of the Tianbao [742-756] reign period was the beginning of the chaos. I alone take it that firing Zhang Jiuling as councilor in the 24th year [736] of the Kaiyuan [713-741] reign period, and reassigning his responsibilities to Li Linfu, that was what marked the division between order and chaos. I urge your honor to take the beginning of the Kaiyuan reign as a model, and the end of the Tianbao reign as a warning. Then the altars of soil and grain will have unlimited good fortune.” Huangfu Bo deeply hated him.

Your servant Zuyu says: Order and chaos of All Under Heaven depends upon the employment of personnel. This can clearly be seen in Minghuang's government. Cui Qun considered demoting Zhang Jiuling and deputing Li Linfu to be the division between order and chaos. He was incited and spoke thus, it can be considered straight to the point. Even if the sages returned, they could not improve upon his words.

八月帝問宰相玄宗之政先理而後亂何也崔羣對曰玄宗用姚崇宋璟盧懷慎
慎蘓頲韓休張九齡則理用宇文融李林甫楊國忠則亂故用人得失所係非
輕人皆以天寶十四年安祿山反為亂之始臣獨以為開元二十四年罷張九
齡相專任李林甫此理亂之所分也願陛下以開元初為法以天寶末為戒乃
社稷無疆之福皇甫鎛深恨之
臣祖禹曰天下治亂係於用人明皇之政昭焉可觀矣崔羣以退張九齡任李
林甫為治亂之所分豈徒有激而云哉其可謂至言矣聖人復起不能易也

Fan Zuyu's critique of this event makes explicit the ideological stance taken in the *Tang Mirror* that it is the employment of personnel, not the direct action of the emperor, that leads to peace and prosperity in the empire. However, there are two other more subtle points made by Fan Zuyu by citing Cui Qun's argument, which apply specifically to the concerns of Fan and his colleagues in the Northern Song period. The first is the context in which Cui Qun makes his argument: a debate with Huangfu Bo 皇甫鎛 (died 820). The final line of the

passage, “Huangfu Bo deeply hated him,” implies that Cui Qun is drawing a connection between himself and the righteous ministers Yao Chong, Song Jing and Zhang Jiuling, on the one hand, and a connection between Huangfu Bo and the corrupt ministers Li Linfu, Yang Guozhong and Yuwen Rong on the other hand. Simultaneously, I would argue, Fan Zuyu is extending this parallelism to himself and his like-minded colleagues who opposed the New Policies of the Northern Song period, who are akin to Yao, Song, Zhang Jiuling and Cui Qun, who stand up for moral principles, in contrast to Wang Anshi and the New Policies faction, who are akin to Huangfu Bo and Li Linfu, who are focused on extracting revenue for the empire from the populace, and will say whatever the emperor wants to hear in order to enhance their own authority. Like Wang Anshi, Huangfu Bo was known for his revenue generating policies, and although the analogy to Wang Anshi is not made explicit by Fan Zuyu, I would argue that it didn't need to be, as it would have been clear to his readers in the 11th century.

The second issue which Fan Zuyu is alluding to in this passage is the problem of palace intrigue and interference in the proper succession of imperial power. The reason Zhang Jiuling was fired, and replaced by Li Linfu in 736 was that Minghuang wanted to depose the crown prince, and Zhang Jiuling refused to support this decision, whereas Li Linfu saw it as an opportunity to manipulate court politics to his own personal advantage. Minghuang's reason for replacing the Crown Prince, Prince Ying 英太子, was not any fault or shortcoming of the crown prince himself, but due to the prince's mother having fallen out of favor with Minghuang, and his current favorite, Consort Wu 武惠妃, pressuring

Minghuang to make her own son the crown prince. Once again, the implied argument here is that the imperial family, and the palace women in particular, should be kept in check by upright officials, who should run the government through proper protocols with minimal interference from the dynastic family members, an argument directed at the powerful women of the Northern Song dynasty mentioned earlier in this chapter. As long as Zhang Jiuling was in power, Minghuang was prevented from deposing the prince, but once Li Linfu took his place as chancellor, he made no objection to Minghuang not only deposing the prince but sentencing him and two of his brothers to forced suicide. The issue is discussed in both the *Tang Mirror* and the *Discussions and Judgments on Tang History*.

The *Tang Mirror* includes the following accounts of the events surrounding Prince Ying:

In the 24th year, Wu Huiwei slandered Prince Ying, Yao the King of E, and Ju the King of Guang. The emperor was very angry and told the prime minister that he wanted to depose all three of them. Zhang Jiuling remonstrated saying: “Your Majesty has trod the eastern steps (ruled as Emperor) for thirty years. The prince and the kings do not leave the inner palace. Daily they receive wise instruction, the people of All Under Heaven all celebrate your long lived reign. Sons and grandsons proliferate and prosper. Today your three sons are all already grown. I have never heard of any great faults. Why would your majesty in a single day, because of unfounded rumors, in the throes of extreme pleasure or anger, completely disown them? The prince is the root of heaven, and cannot be recklessly toppled. In the past, Duke Xian of Jin listened to Li Ji's slander and killed Prince Shensheng.²⁰⁴ For three generations there was utter chaos. Han Wudi believed Jiang

²⁰⁴ In the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, Shensheng was the son of Duke Xian's first wife. After Li Ji was made his first wife she plotted to make her own son prince. She framed Shensheng for trying to poison Duke Xian, and when he sent officers to arrest him he committed suicide. She then slandered his other two sons, and put her own young son on the throne when the duke died, and years of civil war ensued.

Chong's false accusations incriminating Prince Li and the capital flowed with blood.²⁰⁵ Emperor Hui of Jin used Empress Jia's calumny and deposed Prince Minhai. The central plains were mud and ashes. Emperor Wen of Sui accepted Empress Dugu and expelled Prince Yong and established Emperor Yang, and thereupon lost All Under Heaven. From this point of view, one cannot but be cautious. If your majesty insist on wanting to do this, I do not dare to obey it.”

The emperor was displeased. Li Linfu initially had nothing to say but after retiring he addressed the favored and trusted eunuchs and said, “This is a matter of the ruler's family. Why must he ask outsiders?” The emperor hesitated and could not decide. Huifei secretly sent the palace servant Niu Gui'er to tell Zhang Jiuling, “When there is someone deposed, there must be someone promoted. If your honor assists in this, you can have a long career as prime minister.” Jiuling scolded her and reported these words to the emperor. The emperor was livid on account of this and thus in the end Jiuling was dismissed as chancellor. The prince obtained no reprieve. The following year when the emperor was about to depose the prince he summoned the prime ministers to plan it. Linfu responded, “This is your majesty's domestic affair. It is not appropriate for the ministers to intervene in the emperor's intentions in deciding.”

Your servant Zuyu says, “The deposing of Minghuang's three sons was tied to this one sentence of Li Linfu's. Their not yet being deposed was tied to Zhang Jiuling's not yet being dismissed. When the ministers are wise then fathers and sons are mutually preserved. When the ministers are flatterers then the nature of Heaven is extinguished by hatred and enmity. Establishing ministers, can it be done without caution?!”

二十四年武惠妃譖太子瑛鄂王瑶光王瑛帝大怒以語宰相欲皆廢之張九齡諫曰陛下踐阼垂三十年太子諸王不離深宮日受聖訓天下之人皆慶陛下享國久長子孫蕃昌今三子皆已成人不聞大過陛下奈何一旦以無根之語喜怒之際盡廢之乎且太子天下本不可輕搖昔晉獻公聽驪姬之讒殺申生三世大亂漢武帝信江充之誣罪戾太子京城流血晉惠帝用賈后之譖廢愍懷太子中原塗炭隋文帝納獨孤后黜太子勇立煬帝遂失天下由此觀之不可不慎陛下必欲為此臣不敢奉詔帝不悅李林甫初無所言退而私謂宦官之貴幸者曰此主上家事何必問外人帝猶豫未決
惠妃密使宦奴牛貴兒謂九齡曰有廢必有興公為之援宰相可長處九齡叱之以其語白帝帝為之動色為吁偽切故終九齡罷相太子得無動明年將廢太子帝召宰相謀之林甫對曰此陛下家事非臣等宜預帝意乃決

²⁰⁵ Jiang Chong was the head of Wudi's secret intelligence and held a grudge against Prince Li, and planted voodoo dolls and strange writings in Prince Ji's residence to incriminate him. Prince Ji then started a failed uprising after which he committed suicide.

臣祖禹曰明皇三子之廢繫於李林甫之一言其得未廢繫於張九齡之未罷相賢則父子得以相保相佞則天性滅為仇讐孝經九父子之道天性也置相可不慎哉²⁰⁶

...
[The emperor] deposed Prince Ying, Yao the King of E, and Ju the King of Guang. They were all made commoners and sentenced to suicide. In the seventh month the Judge of the Court of Judicial Review Xu Jiao memorialized: "This year there have been 58 judgments of the death penalty. The prison of the Court has for a long time has had a reputation as a place of fierce executioners. Birds would not even roost there. Today there are magpies nesting in its trees." Thereupon all the various officials took it to mean that punishments are practically no longer necessary, and submitted memorials of congratulations. The emperor attributed the success to the assistance of his chief ministers, and bestowed Li Linfu with the noble rank of Duke of Jin and Niu Xianke as Duke of You. Your servant Zuyu says, Minghuang in a single day killed his three sons and Linfu received praise for his management of punishments, obtaining his ambitions through slander and flattery. The order of Heaven was extinguished in this. How could it go on for long without great disorder?

廢太子瑛鄂王瑶光王琚皆為庶人尋賜死七月大理卿徐嶠奏今歲天下斷死刑五十八大理獄院由來相傳殺氣大盛鳥雀不栖今有鵲巢其樹於是百官以幾致刑措幾平聲上表稱賀帝歸功宰輔賜李林甫爵晉國公牛仙客豳國公
臣祖禹曰明皇一日殺三子而林甫以刑措受賞讒諂得志天理滅矣安得久而不亂乎²⁰⁷

Here Fan Zuyu makes clear connections between the issues of proper succession, the conflict between personal domestic issues of the emperor and the public interests of the government, and the contrast between outspoken ministers who criticize the emperor for prioritizing his personal inclinations over the disinterested values of the public good, and flattering ministers who indulge the emperor's personal inclinations in the interest of increasing their own authority.

Sun Fu in his *Discussions and Judgments on Tang History* makes a

²⁰⁶ SKQS Tang jian ch. 9

²⁰⁷ SKQS Tang jian ch. 9

similar argument in his remarks on Yao Chong's career as prime minister. It is the wisdom of the prime ministers that brings about good governance. The most important action that an emperor can take is to recognize such wisdom, and then to depute authority to such individuals without interfering, rather than actively engaging in government himself:

The minister Yao Yuanchong

Discussion says: If the Son of Heaven employs assisting ministers not knowing their loyalties and entrusts them to wait upon him, how can he hold them responsible to succeed? Assisting ministers known by the Son of Heaven not simply collecting policy plans and implementing them in a timely manner, serving wholeheartedly and putting them into practice economically, how can they be called great ministers? From the case of Minghuang (Tang Xuanzong)'s employment of the prime minister Yao Yuanchong the gentleman can obtain this Way. At first Minghuang considered Chong could be prime minister and was about to summon him. Zhang Yue and his generation banded together to slander him [to the Emperor] and to flatter him [to curry favor], could not move either of them. Once he was entrusted with authority, Chong upheld his faithful and honorable intent and acted with all his strength to save the age from dishonor, not doubting that tens of years of chaotic and disorderly government might be transformed into lawfully ordered institutions within a ten day cycle. He eminently rose to the challenge. If this is not the ruler and the minister mutually attaining sincerity to the utmost depth and completeness, what can surpass it? Yet to be Yao Chong would be easy, while to be Minghuang would be difficult. From the time Zhongzong resumed the throne, he took over Empress Wu's fierce government and continued it, moreover he was controlled by Wei Shuren. He used the licentious and covetous, and dismissed the loyal and good; offices and ranks were not appraised, law and order was in great chaos. Again with the tyrannical despotism of Princess Taiping, he did not change his evil ways. Within and without in everyone's hearts they deeply desired order.

Chong had talent and wisdom, and surely was able to observe the harm in affairs of the time, and to know the art of transforming things. In one day taking charge of government and assuaging peoples' hearts, he accomplished it without any difficulty. Minghuang occupied the Prince's lodging and was already deeply angered at the harm of the time. When he first ascended the throne

his keen interest was pursuing order. Deputing Chong was surely fitting. But Zhang Yue had old commendations in assisting the throne and ties to kin to rely on, who occupied positions on the left and on the right and did not cooperate with Chong. Although Chong's talent surpassed Yue's, he ended up removed at a distance. To not depute Yue and depute Chong, that is what is hard to do. Alas! The ruler knows ministers removed at a distance can be employed to entrust with the handles of government, to confidently and sincerely wait upon him, to serve wholeheartedly in order to achieve the accomplishment of the peace and order of Kaiyuan. Rulers of later times are surely correct to take that to be the model of employing sages.

相姚元崇

論曰天子任輔臣非知其忠推誠待之何以責成功輔臣荷天子之知非素蘊策畫通達時務盡節行之何以稱大用明皇之用相姚元崇之事君得其道矣初明皇以崇可相將召之張說輩讒言交結一不能動遂以大柄付之崇荷其信任之意力救時弊行之不疑數十年紛亂之政旬日而變紀綱法令卓然振起非君臣相得之誠至深至悉何以及此然為姚崇則易為明皇則難自中宗復位承武后暴政之餘且為韋庶人所制用姦貪去忠良官職無叙紀綱大亂重以太平暴橫不改其惡中外人心思治甚切崇有才智固能觀時事之弊知變之之術一日當國政順人心行之不難耳明皇居藩邸已憤時弊之甚即位之始銳意求治任崇固宜但張說有輔翊舊勳素親倚方居左右與崇不協崇雖才過於說適在疎遠不任說而任崇此所以為難也嗚呼人主知疎遠之臣可用付以大柄推誠待之使盡其心以成開元治平之業後之人主固宜以此為用賢之法也

In conclusion, the central issues of interest to Song politicians in their debates about Tang history are the role of public minded ministers in promoting good government, and the limitation of the imperial prerogative in general and the role of palace women in particular. These criticisms were not just evaluations of historical events, they were also analogies for the current events of the time, in which activist Emperors such as Shenzong exerted significant influence on the operations and policies of government, and Empress Dowagers toyed with the possibilities of arrogating authority to themselves in ways similar to those of Empress Wu and the Taiping Princess had done during the Tang dynasty.

Furthermore, as I will argue in the next chapter, by circulating these debates and criticisms in print, these authors created an imagined community of scholar officials, with the archetypes of Yao Chong, Song Jing, and their brethren exalted as the ideals to which this imagined community themselves aspired.

Chapter 5: The Work of History in the Age of Print

Chapter two showed that in terms of historiographical practice, the *Old Tang History* represents a “scissors and paste” approach, whereas the *New Tang History*, the *Tang Mirror* and the *Discussions and Judgments on Tang History* represent a “critical” approach.²⁰⁸ The fact that this shift in historiographical orientation takes place between the 10th and 12th centuries suggests an interesting possibility. Specifically, the possibility that this shift in authorial presentation of historical narrative is related to the shift from manuscript to print as the medium for textual exchange. This also opens up a pathway towards cross cultural comparisons between textual practices relating to print culture in China and Western Europe.

The study of print culture, writing, and reading practices is an active field in both Chinese studies and in scholarship on Western Europe and England. On the China side, important recent research by Lucille Chia, Susan Cherniack, Hilde De Weerd, Ming-sun Poon, Dorothy Ko, Joseph McDermott, and Ronald Egan has explored the role that not only print technology, but the commercial book market that developed using this technology, had in changes in education, intellectual history, book production and consumption.

In the study of print and book culture in the West, the landmark studies by Elizabeth Eisenstein and by Febvre and Martin laid the groundwork for research by Roger Chartier, Guglielmo Cavallo, M. B. Parkes and D. F. McKenzie on changes in reading practices that accompanied the growth of book culture.

²⁰⁸ These terms are from Collingwood's *Idea of History*, to be discussed in more detail below.

Finally, the work of R. G. Collingwood on Western historiography provides interesting parallels to developments in Chinese historiography of this period.

Early histories of the Tang dynasty provide an ideal corpus for an investigation of this shift from manuscript to print culture, since they are produced and revised over the course of the period of the shift from manuscript culture (the early Tang) to print culture (the middle Song). Before examining the research related to commercial printing in both eastern and western culture, it is necessary to consider the impact of commercial printing in eleventh century China, and the extent to which these historians and their history books were involved with print culture and the commercial book market.

5.1 The Growth of Commercial Printing in China

The question of the extent of printing and its effect on book culture has been and continues to be a contentious issue among scholars of Chinese literature and history. Those scholars who primarily focus on the Ming dynasty, such as Dorothy Ko and Joseph McDermott, have emphasized the growth of publishing during the 16th century, in particular the *Jiajing* 嘉靖 era (1521-1566), as the period in which manuscript transmission was definitively replaced by the printed book. Dorothy Ko, in her study of Ming printing, proposes that the publishing of block-printed books beginning during the Song dynasty was an age of quality printing and that the mid-sixteenth century “marked the transition from the age of quality printing to that of quantity printing.”²⁰⁹ Ko asserts that the Song dynasty was an age of “quality printing” in which “blocks were cut and proofread

²⁰⁹ Dorothy Ko, p. 35

with meticulous care and only high-quality paper and ink were used. Books, as objets d'art, were prerogatives of the wealthy.”²¹⁰

However, Lucille Chia's study of commercial printing in Jianyang, Fujian challenges this conception of the Song dynasty as an era of strictly quality printing. Jianyang printers were known for their high output of cheaply produced editions, including the *mashaban* editions which were widely derided for being of poor quality, and certainly were not considered objets d'art. Chia argues:

From the early eleventh century onward, we hear numerous complaints about the inferior *Mashaben* that were flooding the market but almost nothing about the high-quality imprints from the same area, and, indeed, sometimes from the same publisher. Although probably not as expensive as, say, the prestigious Directorate imprints, copies of superior Jianyang editions must have been significantly costlier and fewer in number than *Mashaben*. Copies of high-quality Song editions have been cherished by their owners through the centuries. But during the Song such works had a limited circulation, and the bibliophiles and other scholars who had access to them constituted a small elite among the book buyers and readers at that time.²¹¹

The high quality editions produced during the Song set the standard for later publishers, and were prized possessions preserved by collectors and passed down through the generations, while the cheaper Song editions have not survived. For this reason, in hindsight the Song has appeared to be an era of quality printing, but anecdotal evidence from the 11th and 12th centuries suggests otherwise. As Ming-sun Poon argues, in his comprehensive bibliographical study of Song dynasty printed books, “Literary records tended to overlook these

²¹⁰ Ibid.

²¹¹ Lucille Chia, *Printing for Profit* p. 143

editions because of their bad reputation. Collectors treated commercial editions with less care, so these books had smaller chance of survival through the ages. These factors may account for the scarcity of commercial editions we have knowledge of.”²¹²

Both sides of this debate acknowledge, however, an initial increase in the use of printing in reduplicating books during the 11th century, and a further increase in the scale of book printing in the 16th century after a period of relative stagnation during the Yuan and early Ming dynasties. The issue debated is whether the initial increase in printing during the Song dynasty was of a degree sufficient to impact the social and intellectual history of China.

Usually this impact has been conceptualized in economic terms, with the decrease in the price of books, due to the shift from manuscript to print production, inversely proportional to the increase in the number of readers in Chinese society. Research into the economic effects of wood block printing on literacy in Chinese society has largely been divided between those who argue that printed books had a large-scale impact in the Northern Song dynasty and those who argue that print culture didn't really supersede manuscript culture until the Ming dynasty. Both sides of the debate acknowledge that a scarcity of information on book prices in either period poses a difficult problem. Lucille Chia notes that there is scarcely any information on the price of books or the size of print runs for any period in the history of block-printed books in China.²¹³

Denis Twitchett states that printed editions during the Song were luxuries which

²¹² Ming-sun Poon, p. 170

²¹³ Lucille Chia, *Printing for Profit* p. 10; Dorothy Ko p. 36

cost five to eight thousand strings of cash at a time when salaries ranged from 8,000 to 45,000 per month.²¹⁴ Nevertheless, he argues, “Printing did not make cheap editions of a very large range of books available overnight. But once the printing revolution had begun, it steadily gathered momentum, and by the early twelfth century the printed book was everywhere. The long-term social impact of this innovation was drastic and far-reaching.”²¹⁵ *Science and Civilisation in China* argues for a drastic change in print production in the 10th century: “When large-scale printing began to emerge in the +10th century, the output was enormous.”²¹⁶ It goes on to argue that beginning in the ninth century “the cost ratio between a printed edition and a copied manuscript was one to ten. This cost ratio continued with little change in later times.”²¹⁷

These figures suggest that during the tenth and eleventh centuries, printed books became much more accessible to wealthy buyers, but nonetheless remained accessible primarily to wealthy buyers only. However, the scarcity of data makes the extrapolation of general conclusions from such limited examples of economic data impossible. Ko states that “Insufficient information makes it difficult to conduct quantitative studies of the economics of book publishing. With rare exceptions, the price of a book was not printed on the cover, and I know of no extant price list for books.”²¹⁸ Chia agrees on this point, stating “We have almost no data on print runs and the prices of books. For the entire history

²¹⁴ Denis Twitchett p. 52, 64, and p. 91 fn 17

²¹⁵ Denis Twitchett p. 17

²¹⁶ *Science and Civ* p. 369

²¹⁷ *Science and Civ.* p. 373

²¹⁸ Dorothy Ko, p. 36

of Chinese block-printed books, such information can be summarized in a few pages, and little of it pertains to the commercial imprints from Jianyang.”²¹⁹

Although this lack of clear economic data on commercial publishing during the Song is lamentable, other recent research has questioned the underlying assumptions of such an economic approach. It is not valid to assume that book costs were consistent across the geographical territory of Northern Song China, or roughly equivalent for a variety of texts or even a variety of editions of the same texts. With respect to geography, McDermott notes that “in mid-twelfth-century China, the price for an imprint title could vary by as much as 600 per cent, depending on where the text was published.”²²⁰ Regionally the areas with wealth and natural resources produced not only the most books but also the most successful candidates in the civil service examinations. According to *Science and Civilisation* “the top five provinces in the eastern, southeastern, western, and coastal regions, which produced eighty-four percent of the holders of the doctoral degree during the Song period, printed ninety per cent of the books during the same period.”²²¹

The factors that contributed to book production in these areas were the availability of the resources for book production and access to trade routes. This suggests that the correlation between book production and examination success is a result of the correlation of each of these factors with wealthy centers of population. Books were one among many commodities being produced in

²¹⁹ Lucille Chia, *Printing for Profit*, p. 10

²²⁰ McDermott, pp. 60-61

²²¹ *Science and Civ.* p. 379

commercial centers and shipped throughout the empire to a growing market of consumers with cash to spend. The transition from manuscript to book culture was part of the urbanization and commercialization of Chinese society which was taking place in the 9th through 13th centuries and which was concentrated in growing cities in Sichuan, the Middle Yangzi and Fujian in addition to the area around the capital. Rather than an empire-wide reading public with relatively uniform access to books at roughly comparable prices, the markets for printed books were located in wealthy commercial centers, where the books themselves were often produced.

This geographic diversity in the penetration of printed books into Chinese intellectual culture casts doubt on the utility of trying to determine an average price of a printed book compared to the average price of a manuscript, and then assuming that the degree of influence of the printed book is in inverse proportion to the cost of purchasing texts. This kind of quantified framework, where increased printing equals lower prices which in turn equals increased impact on intellectual culture, assumes that printed books were written and read in the same way that manuscripts were, with the primary difference being simply that more people were involved in this reading and writing as books became cheaper. However, not only is the evidence to make this kind of quantitative economic argument unavailable, it may not be as useful as it seems. Lucille Chia concludes:

Certainly we have many more extant Jianyang imprints from the Ming than from earlier periods, even after trying to correct for the variation in survival rates with time. But when we consider that the variety of imprints in the Song and Yuan was not significantly less than in the late Ming, that the impact of printed materials does not

correlate in any simple direct fashion with their numbers, and that lists of titles in collections may not reflect the actual reading habits of their owners and certainly do not reflect those of other readers, then fixing a date for the ascendance of print may not be very useful.²²²

Rather than focusing solely on the effect of printing on book prices and accessibility, a more interesting, and potentially more fruitful approach is to look at qualitative differences in how writers and readers conceived of the uses and functions of books in a print culture, where multiple identical copies of the same texts could be widely distributed for purchase in changing social and intellectual contexts. As Benedict Anderson has described it:

In a rather special sense, the book was the first modern-style mass-produced industrial commodity. The sense I have in mind can be shown if we compare the book to other early industrial products, such as textiles, bricks, or sugar. For these commodities are *measured* in mathematical amounts (pounds or loads or pieces). A pound of sugar is simply a quantity, a convenient load, not an object in itself. The book, however—and here it prefigures the durables of our time—is a distinct, self-contained object, exactly reproduced on a large scale. One pound of sugar flows into the next; each book has its own eremitic self-sufficiency.²²³

This feature of exact reproduction of identical books on a large scale had potential implications for the roles of authors and audiences, and for the acts of reading and writing. More interesting than the issue of how the cheaper cost of printed books affected the price and availability of texts, is the issue of how print changed the way books were written and read. In both the China of the eleventh century and the Europe of the sixteenth century, a number of common trends appear: the popularity of certain genres of writing and the invention of new

²²² Lucille Chia, *Printing for Profit* p. 13

²²³ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* p. 34

genres, changing conceptions of authorship and readership, renegotiation of the relationship between oral address and written text, and the simultaneous revival in classical languages and invention of print vernaculars. To what extent can these developments be attributed to the appearance of the printed book, and to what extent are they the result of other factors?

Before turning to scholarship on the impact of printing on reading and writing practices, and the evidence of the types of qualitative impact printing had on Chinese intellectual history, it is important to establish that the specific texts investigated in this study were actively involved in the commercial print market. Despite the economic discrepancies in prices according to editions, publishers, and markets, there were consistencies across the empire in which types of books were most popular, and historical texts in general, and those relating to the Tang specifically, were among the most widely printed and sold. There is general agreement that the most popular books for both official Directorate editions and inexpensive commercial editions were the Classics and the Histories.²²⁴

Histories were also one of the most popular genres in the early printed book market in the west:

The majority of readers were even more interested in history than in law, and histories, especially those in the vernacular, were often extraordinary successful. We have noted how of the classical writers the historians were particularly popular and often translated.... At the same time a great many humanists were producing histories.²²⁵

The seventeen dynastic histories were first printed under Imperial

²²⁴ Ming-sun Poon p. 170, Chia *Printing for Profit* p. 66, 118-120, Carter *Invention of Printing* pp. 85-86

²²⁵ Febvre and Martin, *The Coming of the Book* p. 283

auspices beginning in 994 and completed in 1061 after the *New Tang History* was finished.²²⁶ Therefore the *Old Tang History* was composed 50 years before this large-scale publishing operation began. In contrast Ouyang Xiu, Song Qi and the other editors of the revised *New Tang History* were aware that it would be distributed in print upon completion. Similarly, although Fan Zuyu achieved fame through the printing of his book, the *Tang Mirror*, he was initially apprehensive about the printing process. Poon notes that the *Tang Mirror* was so popular in the 11th century that the author's son, Fan Wen, was not known by his name, but by the nickname “Son of Tang Mirror.”²²⁷ Poon surmises that in general, “Not every author wrote with the intention of publishing, but the possibility of publishing did encourage Song people to write.”²²⁸

It is clear, then, that the authors of the *New Tang History* and the *Tang Mirror* were aware that their work was being printed and widely read by their contemporaries. These texts can therefore provide a lens to view the possible effects that this qualitative change in the publication of writing had on writers, their work, and its reception among the reading public. In this respect, a cross-cultural comparison to the effects of the commercial book market in the west can be illuminating.

5.2 The History of the Book in the West

The development of the market for printed books followed a different trajectory and took place in a different social context in China and the West, but

²²⁶ *Science and Civ* p. 163

²²⁷ Ming-sun Poon, p. 71, referring to [SKTY pp. 1830-1831]

²²⁸ Ming-sun Poon, p. 70

had some similar outcomes. These differences and similarities can help to disambiguate the influence of print and the influence of other material, economic and social factors.

Besides the popularity of histories, the eleventh century in Chinese book culture saw a boom in popularity in dictionaries and reference works, the practice of silent reading replacing the traditional practice of oral recitation, the appearance of new genres of writing such as historical criticism, new kinds of prose and new uses of language, and changing ideas regarding authorial identity. All of these trends are also apparent in the West from the twelfth century to the seventeenth century. The longer time span over which these developments occurred in the West, and the fact that some of them preceded the development of print and others followed it, suggests that their appearance in eleventh-century China involved additional factors besides print technology alone.

Although the development of print in the West came much later than in China, a comparison between them is very useful for a few reasons. First of all, while the historical phenomenon itself may have occurred later in the West, scholarship on the history of the book and print culture in the West preceded the recent development of scholarship on book history in China. As a result, the methods and theories developed in the study of the history of the book in the West have been and continue to be influential in shaping the approach to this field of Chinese intellectual history. Secondly, where similar developments in reading and writing practices occur in tandem with similar developments in material culture or social practices in these two different times and places, it is

reasonable to posit a relationship between the co-occurring developments.

The growth of the printed book in England and Europe occurred much later than the eleventh-century. The transition from manuscript scrolls to printed books also developed in different stages in the two locales. The invention of printing technology was an important step in the process in both places, but this technology alone was not the only factor in the changing textual forms. Other necessary components include the growing availability of paper and the change in format from a continuous scroll to a paginated volume.²²⁹

In China, the production of inexpensive paper had already begun in the Eastern Han, and expanded greatly in the Tang.²³⁰ As such it contributed significantly to the growth of manuscript culture well before printing technology began to have an effect. During the ninth and tenth centuries, both printing and the format of the “butterfly book” developed relatively simultaneously. In the West, the development of the paginated “codex” began in the second century, when books were still being written on parchment and long before printing had been invented there.²³¹ So while the end result—bound books printed on paper—was the same in both places, the historical processes by which this end result was reached vary considerably. This means that comparisons between the effects of printing in these two milieu must be conducted carefully. The differences in the history of the book in these two contexts could be a hindrance if overlooked, but if taken into consideration they can be helpful in teasing out distinctions between

²²⁹ See Chia and DeWeerd (editors' introduction) *Knowledge and Text Production in an Age of Print*

²³⁰ See YANG Jidong, *Writing in the Tang: Literature and Society in 7-10th Century China*

²³¹ Guglielmo Cavalla and Roger Chartier, *A History of Reading in the West* (1999) p. 15

the effects of particular developments in the material substance of written texts and changes in intellectual history.

The popularity of reference works and compendia is one development which, despite appearing in print media, apparently was not directly related to the appearance of the printed book. It is true that, in addition to histories, dictionaries and other reference works were among the most popular works in the Song dynasty market for printed books.²³² However, these kinds of works achieved a similar popularity in the West before the advent of printing, and appears to be the result of other conditions. Specifically, the change in the physical format of texts from the scroll to the paginated book was suited for quickly locating passages within a text.

The success of the paginated book in both cultural contexts appears to be related to changes in reading practices associated with urbanization and the growth of schools and universities in both cultures. This suggests that the popularity of dictionaries and of compilations such as the *Li dai ming xian que lun* were not so much artifacts of print production as they were the results of the demands of a growing urban population which actively participated in a new educational program.

The demands of new educational programs, rather than the advent of the printed book, also seems to be the driving force behind the appearance of the practice of reading books silently rather than reciting them orally. Cavallo and Chartier write that during the period from the eleventh century to the fourteenth

²³² Lucille Chia, *Printing for Profit* p. 66

century in Europe, there was a change in European reading and writing practices. During the Middle Ages reading and writing practices had remained somewhat separated. The copying and production of books was “a form of pious labor and an instrument of salvation” and the book itself was seen as holy.²³³ One can easily see a parallel between this type of textual production and the production and veneration of Buddhist sutras. The *Lotus Sutra* in particular exhorts the believer to copy and disseminate the text of the sutra, and to revere the book itself as a holy relic.²³⁴

In China, the Song period saw a similar shift from reading aloud to reading silently. Susan Cherniack points out that the Song scholar Ye Mengde complained that the widespread availability of books due to printing led to careless and superficial reading by young scholars, and Zhu Xi lamented that the practices of memorizing and reciting texts aloud was being lost by scholars who read to themselves, and read many books at once instead of concentrating on one book at a time.²³⁵

Based on cross-cultural evidence, printing was not necessary for this shift. This took place in Europe in the early Middle Ages, long before printing was having an effect. Instead, it seems to be the result strictly of the wider availability of books, and the scholarly environment in which reading was taking place. From the eleventh century to the fourteenth century, new kinds of reading and writing

²³³ Cavallo and Chartier, p. 18

²³⁴ For an excellent analysis of such textual practices, see “Buddhist Practice and the *Lotus Sutra* in China,” by Daniel B. Stevenson, in *Readings of the Lotus Sutra*, edited by Stephen Teiser and Jacqueline Stone. See also Leon Hurvitz's introduction to his translation of the *Lotus Sutra*.

²³⁵ Susan Cherniack, “Book Culture and Textual Transmission in Sung China” pp. 48-51; see also Chia, *Printing for Profit* p. 77 on Ye Mengde's remarks, and p. 17; Ronald Egan “To Count the Grains of Sand on the Ocean Floor” in Chia and DeWeerdts eds. *Knowledge and Text Production in an Age of Print*

practices developed. “What had formerly been total, intensive and repetitive reading of a limited number of books gave way to scattered reading of many books. Moreover, this occurred in an age –the age of scholasticism— characterized by an immense increase in the knowledge of written texts and by a demand for a broad but fragmentary knowledge.”²³⁶

These changes in Europe predated the arrival of printing. Instead, they can be attributed to urbanization and the growth of schools and universities, a trend that was also taking place in Song dynasty China.²³⁷

5.3 Similar effects of printing in China and in the West

On the other hand, changes that appear in eleventh-century China that do not appear until sixteenth-century England, such as changing ideas regarding the relationship between spoken and written language, may be attributable to the ability of printing to make multiple identical copies of text widely and rapidly available. One example is the ambivalence authors felt towards having their writing published.

Awareness of the power of print reproduction often provoked ambivalent reactions among Song authors. Song Qi, for example, left a posthumous command that his son not publish his writings.²³⁸ Fan Zuyu also had reservations about the potential repercussions of the publication of his *Tang Mirror*. Had it not been for the intervention of another of his sons, Fan Chong, his book may not have been published at all. Again referring to Poon's research:

²³⁶ Guglielmo and Chartier, pp. 18-19

²³⁷ On urbanization and the growth of schools, see Chaffee *The Thorny Gates of Learning*, Poon pp. 94ff

²³⁸ Ming-sun Poon, p. 45, referring to [CWC] p. 1

Fan Zuyu, who eye-witnessed many political struggles, formed a habit of destroying the memorials he wrote and hiding away his other writings. He was about to petition the destruction of the printing-blocks of his historical masterwork *Tang jian* (Mirror of the T'ang dynasty) when it was being engraved in Kaifeng, only to be rebuked by his son Fan Chong.²³⁹

The ambivalence towards printing expressed by Song Qi and Fan Zuyu is due to two factors: the potential of published writing to be a political detriment to its author, and the lack of control of authors over published editions of their work.

Sun Fu presents an even more extreme example of this fear of the political danger of the publication of his historical criticism. He never allowed anyone to read his work while he was alive, as narrated by Sima Guan in his preface to the book:

From the prime of his life until his old age he completed it without ever showing it to another person. When Wen Lu Gong controlled the government he urged [Sun] Gong to lend it to him. [Sun] Gong did not give it, only copying his discussions of Wei Zheng, Yao Chong and Song Jing to give to him, not to mention the other people whom he firmly would not allow to see it.

自壯年至於白首及成亦未嘗示人文潞公執政嘗從公借之公不與但錄魏徵姚崇宋璟論以與之況他人固不得而見也

Interestingly, as in the case of Fan Zuyu, it is Sun Fu's descendant who is insistent on publishing his work, despite Sun's reluctance to do so himself.

Again, quoting from Sima Guang's preface:

In the second year of Yuan Feng (1079), Cha came to Luoyang from Yangzhai with the book to present to Guang [me] saying, "The aspirations of my uncle's whole life are collected in this book. The

²³⁹ Ming-sun Poon, p. 44, referring to [CSKY p. 33]

court formerly took it and kept it in the forbidden city. Now it has been confiscated for more than 20 years, and my family's Way has greatly declined. I greatly fear that this book will be scattered and lost, and not transmitted among men. Thus I copied it and present it to you.”

Interestingly, in both the case of Fan Zuyu and Sun Fu, it is a younger male relative who advocates publishing despite the authors' own reluctance to do so. This is evocative of Sima Qian suffering punishment in order to complete the work of his father in composing the *Shi Ji*.²⁴⁰ It is also reminiscent of the revisions to accounts of the founding of the Tang which depict Li Yuan acquiescing to the pressure of his son Li Shimin rather than mounting a rebellion himself, as seen in Chapter 2. It may have been a formulaic narrative to avoid appearing vain.

A similar ambivalence toward printing is apparent among English writers of the seventeenth century.²⁴¹

This awareness affected the relationship between authors and their texts, as well as encouraging a proliferation of genres of writing on historical topics. Ming-sun Poon makes note of the specific case of Fan Zuyu's concern regarding the publication of the *Tang Mirror*, and connects it to a more general development in literature related to print culture:

The Tang dynasty was no less an era of literature when writers became prominent figures in society and their writings became widespread among the people. But in the Tang the popular form of literature was restricted to poems because they could be orally disseminated. In Song China, other forms were popular, too, in addition to poems. Tang jian (3792a, *Mirror of the T'ang Dynasty*,

²⁴⁰ See Stephen Durrant, *The Cloudy Mirror*, for an acute analysis of Sima Qian's self-depiction as a filial son.

²⁴¹ D. F. McKenzie *Making Meaning* pp. 247-258

by Fan Zuyu was very popular among the elite class so that Fan Wen, the son of the author, was known not by his name but as “the son of Tang jian. This historical work in twenty-four juan was not a slim volume. The multiplication of copies by printing surely helped it become popular.²⁴²

Another development which does seem to be directly related to print culture is a focus on the tension between the fixity of print versus the revisability of the book. As noted in *Science and Civilisation in China*, “The development of printing naturally encouraged greater emphasis on textual criticism so that more reliable texts could be produced than ever before. Because of the permanence and wider dissemination of the texts, scholars were more aware of the need for its reliability and correctness through careful collation and proof-reading before it was engraved on to blocks.”²⁴³ However, this perceived permanence of print actually stimulated a proliferation of revisions to editions of texts. Chia describes this effect as follows:

The dissemination of these imprints in turn helped spur the literati's enthusiasm for re-examining and re-collating the received texts. Such activities were further encouraged by the rapid growth of commercial printing, which allowed scholars increasing opportunities to see one another's efforts in print—and to continue correcting them. We see in this an example of the continuing conflict between certain official and private uses of print in imperial China. Specifically, the government's efforts to preserve standardized texts without any deliberate effort to disseminate them widely often clashed with the efforts of scholars and commercial printers to transform the texts, for a variety of motives, for better or for worse, which were then meant to be published widely. Song official editions, especially of central government organizations like the Directorate of Education, are generally highly esteemed, and it is an ironic tribute to them that the many commercial editions descended from them, directly or indirectly,

²⁴² Ming-sun Poon, p. 71 (for consistency, Wade Giles romanizations have been converted to pinyin)

²⁴³ *Science and Civilisation in China* p. 377

succeeded in subverting official efforts to preserve a standardized text and ultimately effected many more of the text-shifting changes facilitated by printing.²⁴⁴

Similarly, Susan Cherniack describes as follows the effects of the repeated re-issue of corrected editions of the Nine Classics by the Directorate of Education in 996, 1001, 1005, 1014 and 1021:

In the Tang, projects to establish definitive texts of the classics had culminated in texts that were fixed on stone stelae with monumental finality. Once the texts were engraved on stone, the subject of revisions was, for all practical purposes, closed. The medium, stone, signified (as one Tang writer put it) “an inerasable authority,” which proclaimed that “a hundred ages hence no adjustments [in the texts] need be made;” the idea of permanence was inseparable from the meaning of the classics themselves. In taking advantage of the capabilities of printing to improve texts, however, the Song Directorate showed that, for better or worse, definitive editions established on woodblocks did not possess the finality of those engraved in stone. The association of government printing with impermanent and endlessly revisable canonical texts was an idea with productive consequences for classical scholarship, which thrived on the freedom afforded by fluid imprints.²⁴⁵

The proliferation of revised narratives of the history of the Tang dynasty which appeared in this time period can also be seen as part of this impulse to continually correct and improve upon current books which accompanies the dissemination of printed books. This same impulse appears again in the print book market in seventeenth-century England. As McKenzie points out, the ability to revise editions is not just a possibility presented by print technology, it is a necessity generated by commercial publishing:

This obsession with the permanence of print is a powerful element in its mythology as the art that preserves all arts. And yet it is only

²⁴⁴ Lucille Chia, *Printing for Profit* p. 9

²⁴⁵ Susan Cherniack, “Book Culture and Textual Transmission in Sung China,” pp. 60-1

part of the story. What it fails to provide for is the problem that troubled Daniel and, later, Yeats and James: the impulse to qualify and revise. What needs, I think, to be equally stressed is the *ephemerality* of print. On any larger view, the book trade is economically dependent upon ideas wearing out--on the dynamics of change. Revised texts are a good excuse to go yet again to market; and, in the exchange of ideas, one book is never more than a thesis, or an antithesis, in an endless dialectic which is both intellectual and commercial.²⁴⁶

Anne McLaren has argued that this tension between the permanence and the revisability of print was apparent in the proliferation of histories of the Three Kingdoms period which were published during the Song dynasty. She writes

The contestation between the standard history of *Sanguozhi* and the revisionist histories is illustrative of the tension between what has been called the ‘fixity’ of print, that is, its seeming ability to render a text endlessly multipliable in an identical format, and its propensity to inspire the production of counter-texts that revise, challenge, or creatively misread the original text.²⁴⁷

I would argue that similarly, the revision of Tang history during this period was a similar phenomenon. The eleventh-century saw not only the sponsorship of the compilation of the *New Tang History* and the publication of the *Discussions and Judgments on Tang History* and the *Tang Mirror*, it also saw the publication of the *Xin Tang shu jiu miu* and the *Tang Shu zhi bi*, texts which specifically pointed out and corrected errors in the Tang histories and promoted the *Old Tang History* and the *New Tang History* respectively. These kinds of books are clearly an artifact of the “endless dialectic” described by McKenzie

²⁴⁶ D. F. McKenzie *Making Meaning* p. 250

²⁴⁷ Anne McLaren “Challenging Official History in the Song and Yuan Dynasties: The Record of the Three Kingdoms” in Chia and DeWeerd; see also Eisenstein *Printing Revolution* p.. 51-63, 78ff.; Adrian Johns, *Nature of the Book*, p. 6

above.²⁴⁸

Related to this continual revision of editions is the rise of a new kind of textual scholarship which seeks to uncover the true intentions of classical authors, free of corruptions or later interpolations.²⁴⁹ The claim to be restoring the original text provided the justification for revising the text. As Cherniak describes, this created a new kind of claim for textual authority.

The denial of the authorial origins of various details of the classics provides a sanction for textual revisions, and such revisions are carried out with the goal of restoring an authorial text. Textual authority has not been lost, but rather transferred from a tradition-based model to a model in which individual readers may assert their own rights to determine authorial intent in the classics, independent of tradition.²⁵⁰

The quest for a definitive edition had the effect of producing a multiplicity of competing editions in the market for printed books.²⁵¹ This in turn contributed to the skeptical trend in Song dynasty scholarship, including the questioning of the received tradition regarding Tang history.

Along with this skeptical trend in textual scholarship, the atmosphere of print culture induced an emphasis on interpretation rather than preservation as the goal of writing. This is apparent in the *Discussions and Judgments on Tang History* and in the *Tang Mirror*, which focus on the author's arguments regarding Tang history, rather than the actual history of the Tang itself.

It is true that many works of Song historiography placed a great emphasis

²⁴⁸ On the relationship between printing and the *jiu miu* genre, see Ming-sun Poon p. 72, Cherniak pp. 66-72

²⁴⁹ See Febvre and Martin, *The Coming of the Book* pp. 253, 276

²⁵⁰ Susan Cherniak "Book Culture and Textual Transmission in Sung China," p. 24

²⁵¹ See *Science and Civilisation* pp. 373-377; Lucille Chia *Printing for Profit* p. 9

on preserving a multiplicity of sources. Sima Guang's *kaoyi* which accompanied his monumental *Comprehensive Mirror for Aid in Government* is a prime example of this kind of preservation of competing sources. However, this is a different kind of preservation of texts than that of preceding eras. The sources are not preserved as authorities, but as potential evidence upon which the historian makes an authoritative judgment. This is indicative of the shift in Western historiography which took place in the early stages of print culture, as analyzed by Collingwood in his *The Idea of History*. He writes:

At this stage, authorities vanish and we are left with sources instead. The difference is that whereas an authority makes statements which we accept and repeat, a source is something which enables us to make a statement of our own. In using authorities we are passive, in using sources we are active. In authorities we find history ready-made, in sources we find the materials out of which we have to make it for ourselves.²⁵²

Related to this emphasis on interpretation of the past was a new appreciation for the reputation of the author. Febvre and Martin describe this effect as follows:

A desire for typographic accuracy and the constant search for the best manuscript version of a text to provide the basis for a published edition provided an immense stimulus for philological studies. Moreover, while in the Middle Ages authors had had little interest in attaching their name to a work, printers were led to seek out, or have sought out, the true identity of the author of the works they printed--where, that is, they didn't invent it. ...Contemporary writers who had their names attached to hundreds and thousands of copies of their works became conscious of their individual reputations. This new kind of stimulus was also the sign of a new age when artists began to sign their works, and authorship takes on

²⁵² R. G. Collingwood, *The Idea of History* p. 488

an altogether new significance.²⁵³

The example of Fan Zuyu, described above, illustrates the new ability of authors to achieve an unprecedented level of fame in their own lifetimes in the print book market of eleventh-century China.

In his study of the growth of the printed book trade in seventeenth-century England and the consequent changes in writing, D. F. McKenzie notices that “When we look at the books themselves, we can see writers and printers seeking to limit the difference of print by devising ways to suggest its affinities with speaking and writing. It is most notable of course in forms of address and of dialogue,” and in the “practice of using print more generally as if it *were* public speaking and writing.”²⁵⁴

This development is mirrored in the growth of new genres in eleventh-century China. Kojima Tsuyoshi describes the new genre of “oral lectures” or “lecture notes” (*kouyi*) that became popular in the Qingli era. It was a new genre consisting of compilations of records of lectures by prominent scholar-officials of the time, in which they presented new evaluations of classical scholarship.²⁵⁵

Likewise, I would argue, the new genre of historical criticism attempted to represent the format of an oral lecture in a printed form. There are a number of clues which suggest that the *Discussions and Judgments on Tang History* and the *Tang Mirror* were presented as, and received as, oral lectures in printed form.

²⁵³ Febvre and Martin, *The Coming of the Book*, p. 261

²⁵⁴ D. F. McKenzie *Making Meaning: “Printers of the Mind” and Other Essays* pp. 251-252

²⁵⁵ Kojima Tsuyoshi, “Great Confucian or Mere Strategist? Chia I in the Eyes of Sung Thinkers,” p. 40

In both of these texts, each passage is introduced by phrases which connote a form of oral address. It is true that this convention has roots in the critiques provided by Sima Qian at the end of the chapters of the *Shi ji*, which are introduced by phrases such as *tai shi gong yue* 太史公曰 “the historian says”. Furthermore, this convention was continued in official histories up to and including both the *Old Tang History* and the *New Tang History*. However, in other historical texts, these remarks are brief conclusions or evaluations appended to the written record which comprises the majority of the content of the histories. In the *Discussions and Judgments on Tang History* and the *Tang Mirror*, these oral remarks themselves comprise the majority of the content of the book. In the *Discussions and Judgments on Tang History*, the author's remarks on the historical record are the only content of the book. Furthermore, the fact that these remarks were intended to be read as a record of oral teachings is implied by the remarks of Ouyang Xiu in his grave inscription for Sun Fu, author of the *Discussions and Judgments on Tang History*:

His scholarship was broad and his memory keen, and he especially enjoyed talking of Tang affairs, describing its rulers' and ministers' conducting of business from roots to branches in order to infer his view of the order and disorders of the time, always [arguing on behalf of others] as if he himself walked among them so that the listener was as clear as if seeing it before his eyes. For this reason scholars said of him that reading history for an entire year wasn't as good as listening to his discussions for a single day. The discussions and arguments in *Tang shi ji*, which he was writing in 75 *juan*, are broad and abundant. The book was not yet completed when he died in his home. As he was about to die he requested his book be hidden away in a [secret repository/secretariat]. And yet, as the preface by Sima Guang makes clear, these were not records of his oral lectures, but a carefully crafted book composed in written form

by Sun Fu himself.²⁵⁶

The inclusion of this inscription with the preface to the *Discussions and Judgments on Tang History* invites the reader to receive the text as if hearing Sun Fu himself discussing the events with the reader. This creates the kind of ambiguous status of the book as both writing and speech, which McKenzie attributes to Milton and other writers of the seventeenth-century English speaking world, as they negotiate the uses of the new technology of printing.²⁵⁷

In the case of the *Tang Mirror* the oral pronouncements are not the only content, but they are the focus of the text. Unlike in the *Discussions and Judgments on Tang History*, in the *Tang Mirror* an excerpt of the historical record precedes each judgment put forward by Fan Zuyu. However, the majority of the text is comprised of Fan Zuyu's remarks. The excerpts from the historical record are usually short passages from the *Comprehensive Mirror*. This format, in which a brief passage from the *Comprehensive Mirror* is followed by detailed remarks, suggests the format of the Classics Mat lectures to the emperor which originated in the early eleventh century. Fan Zuyu in fact served as a history lecturer in the Classics Mat. Consequently, it is tempting to read his book as a record of the lectures given during his tenure as history lecturer in the Classics Mat.²⁵⁸ However, as in the case of the *Discussions and Judgments on Tang History*, the simulation of a record of spoken lectures recorded in print belies the

²⁵⁶ [My translation, from the appended materials *fulu* included with the preface to the *Discussions and Judgments on Tang History*]

²⁵⁷ D. F. McKenzie, *Making Meaning* p. 251

²⁵⁸ See Anne McLaren, "Challenging Official History in the Song and Yuan Dynasties: The Record of the Three Kingdoms," in Chia and DeWeerd, eds., pp. 335-336

actual circumstances of the composition of the book. The dedications to the Emperor and to the Empress Dowager written by Fan Zuyu upon presenting his book to the throne show that the entire book was completed before Fan held the position of lecturer. It is quite possible that he composed and presented this book to the throne in a bid to obtain that position. His book therefore doesn't represent a printed record of his oral teachings on history to the emperor put into writing after the fact, as it would seem, but a simulation of what he would present in his oral teachings composed prior to obtaining that position. The appearance of orality is intentional, but this self-representation of the text as a written artifact of an oral presentation is in fact a fiction.

5.4 Conclusions

The ancient style prose movement and the new genre of historical criticism were both methods of not only expressing, but also of creating, an ideology that upheld the values of Confucian culture but reinterpreted them to promote the interests of the degree holders that formed the new elite. Those who identified with this ideology saw themselves in contention with women of the imperial household and the Buddhist clergy for positions of influence at court. The revised and reinterpreted histories of the Tang written during the eleventh century employed historical analogism to highlight similar struggles in the Tang period with which they identified. In so doing, they used the printed reproduction of Tang history and the popularity of this subject among the growing reading public to create an imagined community of like minded

individuals.

The didactic use of history for moral and political ends has a long history in Chinese historiography and is not related to the development of print culture. Practices such as silent reading and the proliferation of reference works, while occurring at the same time as the development of print culture, seem to be more closely related to the growth in schools and the examination system, and the new format of the book instead of the scroll, rather than being a direct result of printing and changing attitudes toward printed books. However, the development of the genre of historical criticism and the development of the ancient style prose movement at the same time as the development of printing may be more than just a coincidence. Each of these developments are related to a shift from writing as a means of preserving historical information to a means of interpreting a body of historical information that exists independently, and related to a renegotiation of the relationship between written and spoken language. Both of these movements presented a thorough knowledge of the language and history of the past, not as ends in themselves, but as means to reflect upon the present, and to express oneself persuasively.

List of Abbreviations

CHC *Cambridge History of China*

HCLJ *Han Changli ji* “Collected Works of Han Yu”

JTS *Jiu Tang shu* “Old Tang History”

SKQS *Si ku quan shu* “Four Treasuries of All Books”

TJ *Tang Jian* “Tang Mirror”

XTS *Xin Tang shu* “New Tang History”

ZZTJ *Zi zhi tong jian* “Comprehensive Mirror for Aid in Government”

Appendix 1

Tang Gaozu's letter to Li Mi as recorded in the *Diary of Activity and Repose for the Founding of the Tang Dynasty*. **Bold words** are copied identically in the *Old Tang History* account; underlined words are copied identically into the *Tang Mirror* account; none of the content is included in the *New Tang History* account.

頃者崑山火烈海水羣飛赤縣邱墟黔黎塗炭布衣戍卒耰鋤棘矜爭帝圖王狐鳴蠶起翼
翼京洛強弩圍城膻膻周原僵屍滿路主上南巡泛膠舟而忘返匈奴北熾將被髮於伊川
輦上無虞羣下結舌大盜移國莫之敢指忽焉至此自貽伊戚七百年之基窮於二世周齊
以往書契以還邦國淪胥未有如斯之酷者也

則我高祖之業墜於地吾雖庸劣幸承餘緒出為八使入典八屯位未為高足成非賤素飡當
世俛叨榮從容平勃之間誰云不可但顛而不扶通賢所責主憂臣辱無義徒然等袁公而流
涕極賈生之慟哭所以仗旗投袂大義兵綏撫河朔和親蕃塞共匡天下志在尊隋以弟見機
而作一日千里雞鳴起舞豹變先鞭御宇當塗聿來中土兵臨邾鄆將觀周鼎營屯敖倉酷似
漢王前遣簡書屈為唇齒今辱來莫我肯顧

天生蒸民必有司牧當今為牧非子而誰老夫年踰知命願不及此欣戴大弟攀鱗附翼惟
冀早膺圖籙以寧兆庶宗盟之長屬籍見容復封于唐斯足榮矣殫商辛於牧野所不忍言
執子嬰於咸陽非敢聞命汾晉左右尚須安輯盟津之未暇卜期今日鑾輿南幸恐同永嘉
之勢顧此中原鞠為茂草興言感歎實疚於懷脫知動靜遲數貽報未面虛襟用增勞軫名
利之地鋒鏑縱橫深慎垂堂勉茲鴻業

Appendix 2

Below is the content of the memorials presented to Tang Gaozu by Sun Fuque, as recorded in the *Old Tang History* (JTS *Jiu Tang shu*), the *New Tang History* (XTS *Xin Tang shu*), and the *Tang Mirror* (TJ *Tang Mirror*). **Bold words** appear in both the JTS and XTS, underlined words appear in both the JTS and the TJ.

其一曰：臣聞天子有諍臣，雖無道不失其天下，父有諍子，雖無道不陷于不義。故云子不可不諍於父，臣不可不諍於君。此言之，臣之事君，猶子之事父故也。	JTS
其一：臣聞天子有爭臣，雖無道不失其天下。	XTS
	TJ

隋後主所以失天下者何也？止為不聞其過。	JTS
隋失天下者何不聞其過也。	XTS
以為隋以惡聞其過亡天下。	TJ

當時非無直言之士。由君不受諫，自謂德盛唐堯，功過夏禹，	JTS
方自謂功德盛五帝邁三王。	XTS
	TJ

窮侈極慾，以恣其心。天下之士，肝腦塗地，戶口減耗，盜賊日滋，	JTS
窮侈極欲使天下士，肝腦塗地，戶口殫耗，盜賊日滋。	XTS
宜易其覆轍。務盡下情。	TJ

而不覺知者，皆由朝臣不敢告之也。	JTS
當時非無直言之臣，卒不聞，悟者君不受諫而臣不敢告之也。	XTS
	TJ

向使修嚴父之法，開直言之路，選賢任能，賞罰得中，人人樂業，誰能搖動者乎？不師古訓者，止為天誘其咎，將以開今聖唐也。	JTS
向使開不諱之路，官賢授能賞罰時當。人人樂業，誰能搖亂者乎？	XTS
	TJ
陛下龍舉晉陽，天下響應，計不旋踵，大位遂隆。	JTS
陛下舉晉陽，天下響應，計不旋踵大業，	XTS
	TJ
所以前朝好為變更，陛下勿以唐得天下之易，不知隋失之不難也。陛下貴為天子，富有天下，動則左史書之，言則右史書之。既為竹帛所拘，何可恣情不慎。	JTS
以成勿以得天下之易而忘隋失之不難也。天子動則左史書之，言則右史書之。	XTS
人君言動。不可不慎。	TJ
凡有蒐狩，須順四時，既代天理，安得非時妄動？陛下二十日龍飛，二十一日有獻鶴鷄者，此乃前朝之弊，少年之事務，何忽今日行之！	JTS
凡蒐狩當順四時不可忘動。且陛下即位之明日有獻鶴者。	XTS
陛下今日即位。而明日有獻鶴雞者。	TJ
又聞相國參軍事盧牟子獻琵琶，	JTS
不卻而受此前世弊事。柰何行之相國參軍事盧牟子獻琵琶。	XTS
	TJ
長安縣丞張安道獻弓箭，頻蒙賞勞。但“普天之下，莫非王土；率土之濱，莫非王臣。”陛下必有所欲，何求而不得？陛下所少者，豈此物哉！願陛下察臣愚忠，則天下幸甚。	JTS
長安丞張安道獻弓矢竝被賚賞以率土之富何索不致豈少此物哉。	XTS
	TJ
其二曰：百戲散樂，本非正聲，有隋之末，大見崇用，此謂淫風，	JTS
其二：百戲散樂，本非正聲。隋末始見崇用此謂淫風。	XTS
又百戲散樂。亡國淫聲。	TJ

不可不改。近者，太常官司於人間借婦女裙襦五百餘具，以充散妓之服，云擬五月五日於玄武門遊戲。	JTS
不得不變。近太常假民裙襦五百稱以衣，妓工待玄武門遊戲。	XTS
近太常於民間借婦女裙襦以充妓衣。擬五月五日元武門遊戲。	TJ

臣竊思審，實損皇猷，亦非貽厥子孫謀，為後代法也。故書云：	JTS
臣以為非貽子孫之謀。傳曰：	XTS
非所以為子孫法也。	TJ

“無以小怨為無傷而弗去。”恐從小至於大故也。論語云：“放鄭聲，遠佞人”又云：“樂則韶舞”以此言之，散妓定非功成之樂也。如臣愚見，請並廢之，則天下不勝幸甚。	JTS
“放鄭聲，遠佞人。”今散妓者匪韶匪夏請並廢之以復雅正	XTS
	TJ

其三曰：臣聞性相近而習相遠，以其所好相染也。故書云：“與治同道罔弗興，與亂同事罔弗亡。”以此言之，興亂其在斯與！	JTS
其三：臣聞性相近習相遠。	XTS
	TJ

皇太子及諸王等左右群僚，不可不擇而任之也。	JTS
今皇太子諸王左右執事不可不擇。	XTS
又言太子諸王參僚。宜謹擇其人。	TJ

如臣愚見，但是無義之人，及先來無賴，家門不能邕睦，	JTS
大抵不義無賴	XTS
	TJ

及好奢華馳獵馭射，專作慢遊狗馬聲色歌舞之人，不得使親而近之也。	JTS
及馳騁射獵歌舞聲色慢游之人。	XTS
	TJ

此等止可悅耳目，備驅馳，至於拾遺補闕，決不能為也。	JTS
止可悅耳目，備驅馳至拾遺補闕決不能也。	XTS

	TJ
臣歷窺往古，下觀近代，至於子孫不孝，兄弟離間，莫不為左右亂之也。願陛下妙選賢才，以為皇太子僚友，如此即克隆盤石，永固維城矣。	JTS
汎觀前世子姓不克孝兄弟不克友，莫不由左右亂之。願選賢才，澄僚友之選	XTS
	TJ
高祖覽之 <u>大悅</u> ，	JTS
帝 <u>大悅</u>	XTS
帝省表 <u>大悅</u> 下詔褒稱。擢為治書御史。賜帛三百匹。頒示遠近。	TJ

Appendix 3

Below is the account of Wei Cigong protesting attempts by the inner palace to interfere in Shunzong's accession to the throne, as recorded in the *Old Tang History* (JTS *Jiu Tang shu*), the *New Tang History* (XTS *Xin Tang shu*), and the *Tang Mirror* (TJ *Tang jian*). **Bold words** appear in both the JTS and XTS, underlined words appear in both the JTS and the TJ.

二十一年正月德宗昇遐時東宮疾恙方甚倉卒召學士鄭綱等至金鑾殿中人 或云內中商量所立未定衆人未對次公遽言曰皇太子雖有疾地居冢嫡內外 繫心必不得已當立廣陵王若有異圖禍難未已綱等隨而唱之衆議方定	JTS
德宗崩與鄭綱皆召至金鑾殿時皇太子久疾禁中或傳更議所立衆失色次公 曰太子雖久疾冢嫡也內外係心久矣必不得已宜立廣陵王綱隨贊之議乃定	XTS
癸巳帝崩蒼猝召翰林學士鄭綱衛次公等至金鑾殿草遺詔宦官或曰禁中議 所立尚未定衆莫敢對次公遽言曰太子雖有疾地居冢嫡中外屬心必不得已 猶應立廣陵王不然必大亂綱等從而和之議始定	TJ

Table 3.1: Biographies of Chu Suiliang

Comparison of the biographies of Chu Suiliang in the *Old Tang History* JTS (*Jiu Tang shu*) and the *New Tang History* (XTS *Xin Tang shu*)

JTS	十五年詔 有事太山先幸洛陽有星孛于太微犯郎位遂良言於太宗曰
XTS	十五年帝將有事太山 至洛陽 星孛 太微犯郎位遂良諫 曰
JTS	陛下撥亂反正功超前烈將告成東嶽天下幸甚而行至洛陽彗星輒見此 或有 所未允合者也且漢武 優柔 數年
XTS	陛下撥亂反正功超古初方告成岱宗 而 彗 輒見此天意有 所未 合 昔漢武帝行岱禮優柔者數年
JTS	始行岱禮臣愚伏願 詳擇太宗深然之下詔罷封禪之事其年遷諫議大夫兼知 起居事太宗嘗問卿知起居
XTS	臣愚 願加詳慮帝寤 詔罷封禪 遷諫議大夫兼知起 居事帝曰 卿記起居
JTS	記錄何事大抵人君得觀之否遂良對曰今之起居古
XTS	大抵人君得觀之否 對曰今之起居古
JTS	左右史書人君言事且記善惡以為鑒誠庶幾人主不為非法不聞帝王躬自觀史
XTS	左右史也 善惡 必記戒人主不為非法未聞天子自觀史也
JTS	太宗曰朕有不善卿必記之耶遂良曰守道不如守官臣職當載筆君舉必記
XTS	帝曰朕有不善卿必記 邪 對曰守道不如守官臣職 載筆君舉必書
JTS	黃門 侍郎劉洎曰設令遂良不記天下 亦記之矣
XTS	劉洎曰使 遂良不記天下之人亦記之矣
JTS	太宗以 為然
XTS	帝曰朕行有三一監前代成敗以為元龜二進善人其 成政道三斥遠羣小不受讒 言朕能守而勿失亦欲史 氏不能書吾惡也
JTS	時魏王為太宗所愛禮秩如嫡其年 太宗問侍 臣 曰當今國家何事最 急中書侍郎岑文本曰傳稱導之以德齊之以禮由斯

XTS	是時魏王泰 禮秩如嫡羣臣未敢諫 帝從容訪左右曰方今 何事尤急 岑文本汎
JTS	而言禮義為急 遂良進曰當今四方仰德誰敢為非但太子諸王 須有定分陛下宜為萬
XTS	言禮義為急帝以不切未領可遂良 曰 今四方仰德誰弗率者惟太子諸王 宜有定分
JTS	代法以遺子孫太宗曰此言是也朕年將五十已覺衰怠既以長子守器東宮弟及 庶子數將五十 心常憂慮頗在此耳
XTS	帝曰 有是哉朕年 五十日以衰怠 雖長子守器而 弟 支子 尚五十人心常念焉
JTS	但古嫡庶無良何嘗不傾敗國家公等為朕搜訪賢德以傳儲宮爰及諸王咸求正 士且事人歲久即分義情深 非意窺窬多
XTS	自古宗姓無良 則傾敗相仍公等為我 簡賢者保傳之 夫事人 久 情媚熟則非意
JTS	由此作於是限王府官僚不得過四考七年太宗問遂良曰舜造漆器禹雕其俎當 時諫舜禹者十餘人食器之間苦諫何也
XTS	自生其令 王府官 不得過四考著為令帝 嘗怪舜造漆器禹雕其俎 諫 者十餘不止小物何必爾邪
JTS	遂良對曰雕琢害 農事纂組傷女工首創奢淫危亡之漸 漆器不已必金為之 金器不已必玉為之所以諍臣必諫其漸
XTS	遂良 曰雕琢害力農 纂繡傷女工奢靡之始危亡之漸也漆器不止必金為之 金又不止必玉為之 故諫者救其源不使得開
JTS	及其滿盈 無所復諫 太宗以為然因曰夫為人君不憂萬姓而事奢淫危亡之 機可反掌而待也
XTS	及夫橫流則無 復事矣 帝咨美之
JTS	時皇子年幼者多任都督刺史遂良上疏曰昔兩漢以郡國理人除郡以外分立 諸子割土分疆雜用周制皇唐州縣祖依秦法
XTS	于時皇子雖幼皆外任都督刺史遂良 諫曰昔二漢以郡國參治 雜用周制 今州縣率做秦法

JTS	皇子幼年或授刺史陛下豈不以王之骨肉鎮扞四方此之造制道高前烈如臣愚見有小未盡何者刺史郡帥民仰以安得一善人部內蘇息遇一不善合州勞弊是以人君愛恤百姓常為擇賢或稱河潤九里京師
XTS	而皇子孺年並任刺史陛下 誠以至親扞四方 雖然刺史民之師帥也
JTS	蒙福或人興歌詠生為立祠漢宣帝云與我共理者惟良二千石如
XTS	得人則下安措失人則家勞劫故
JTS	漢宣帝云與我共理者惟良二千石如
XTS	漢宣帝曰與我共 治惟良二千石乎
JTS	臣愚見陛下兒子內年齒尚幼未堪臨人者且留京師教以經學一則畏天之威不敢犯禁
XTS	臣謂 皇子 未冠者可且留京師教以經學 畏仰天威不敢犯禁
JTS	二則觀見朝儀自然成立因此積習自知為人審堪臨州然後 遣出臣謹按漢明章和三帝能友愛于弟自茲已降取為準的封立諸王
XTS	養成德器審堪臨州然後敦遣昔 東漢明章 諸帝 友愛子弟
JTS	雖各有國土年尚幼小者召留京師訓 以禮法 X 以恩惠訖三帝世諸王數十百人唯二王稍惡 自餘滄和染教皆為善人則前事已
XTS	雖各有國 幼 者率留京師訓飭以禮 訖 其世諸王數十百惟二人以惡敗自餘滄和染教皆為善良此前事已
JTS	驗惟陛下詳察太宗深納之
XTS	驗惟陛下省察 帝嘉納
JTS	其年太子承乾以罪廢魏王泰入侍太宗面許立為太子因謂侍臣曰昨青雀自投我懷 云臣今日始得與陛下為子更生之日也
XTS	太子承乾 廢魏王泰間侍 帝 許立為 嗣因謂大臣曰 泰昨自投我懷中云臣今日始得為陛下 子更生之日也

JTS	臣唯有一子臣百年之後當為陛下殺之傳國晉王父子之道故當天性我見其如此甚憐之
XTS	臣惟有一子 百年 後當 殺之傳國晉王 朕 甚憐之
JTS	遂良進曰陛下失言伏願審思無令錯誤也安有陛下百年之後魏王執權為天下之主而能殺其愛子傳國於晉王者乎
XTS	遂良 曰陛下失言 安有 為天下 主而 殺其愛子授國 晉王 乎
JTS	陛下昔立承乾為太子而復寵愛魏王禮數或有踰於承乾者良由嫡庶不分所以至此殷鑒不遠足為龜鏡陛下今日既立魏王
XTS	陛下昔以承乾為嗣 復寵愛泰 嫡庶不明紛紛 至今若必
JTS	伏願陛下別安置晉王始得安全耳太宗涕泗交下曰我不能即日召長孫無忌房玄齡李勣與遂良等定策立晉王為皇太子
XTS	立泰非別 置晉王不可 帝泣 曰我不能即詔 長孫無忌房玄齡李勣與遂良等定策立晉王為皇太子
JTS	時頻有飛雉集於宮殿之內太宗問羣臣曰是何祥也對曰昔秦文公時有童子化為雉雌者鳴於陳倉雄者鳴於南陽童子曰得雄者王得雌者霸文公遂以為寶雞後漢光武
XTS	時飛雉數集宮中帝問是何祥也遂良曰昔秦文公時有侏子化為雉雌鳴陳倉雄鳴南陽侏子曰得雄者王得雌者霸文公遂雄諸侯始為寶雞祠漢光武
JTS	得雄遂起南陽而有四海陛下舊封秦王故雄雉 見於秦地此所以彰表明德也太宗悅曰立身之道不可 無學遂良
XTS	得其雄起南陽 有四海陛下本封秦 故雄雌並見 以告 明德 帝悅曰人之立身不可以無學遂良所
JTS	博識深可重也尋授太子賓客
XTS	謂多識君子哉俄授太子賓客

Table 3.2 Uses of *yu* in Selected Biographies from the Old Tang History (JTS) and the New Tang History (XTS)

	<i>Yu</i> (total)	於	于
JTS 107 “Commoner Li Ying”	13	13	0
XTS 82 “Prince Li Ying”	1	0	1
JTS 66 “Fang Xuanling”	27	26	1
XTS 96 “Fang Xuanling”	5	2	3
JTS 80 “Chu Suiliang”	41	40	1
XTS 105 “Chu Suiliang”	6	5	1
JTS 91 “Huan Yanfan,” “Zhang Jianzhi”	17	16	1
XTS 120 “Huan Yanfan,” “Zhang Jianzhi”	4	4	0
JTS 96 “Yao Chong,” “Song Jing”	32	32	0
XTS 124 “Yao Chong,” “Song Jing”	15	13	2
JTS 135 “Pei Yanling” (excerpt)	6	5	1
XTS 167 “Pei Yanling” (excerpt)	1	1	0
JTS 140 “Zhang Jianfeng” (excerpt)	3	3	0
XTS 158 “Zhang Jianfeng” (excerpt)	4	1	3
JTS 135 “Wei Zhiyi,” “Wang Shuwen,” “Wang Pei”	13	10	3
XTS 168 “Wei Zhiyi,” “Wang Shuwen,” “Wang Pei”	3	2	1
JTS 160 “Han Yu”	46	39	7
XTS 176 “Han Yu”	42	33	9
JTS total	198	184	14
XTS total	81	61	20

Appendix 4

Liu Zongyuan's letter to Han Yu regarding history:

21st day of the first month, Zongyuan bows his head 18 times to Minister Tuizhi. Previously I obtained a letter with your words on your affairs as historian as told in your letter to Liu Xiucan [check Hucker]. Now upon reading your letter [] my heart is very unhappy. Compared to Tuizhi's words of years past it is very absurd, as if the words in the letter were not right for Tuizhi. One day in office and having suppositions the intentions of the prime minister be to improperly glorify him with the office of historian, how can this be the one Han Tuizhi? If this be the case, how is it fitting that Tuizhi emptily accepted the prime minister's glorification of himself and falsely occupies the office, [...] and takes the official salary made for compensating official duties in order to use the paper and pen for personal letters in order to contribute to his disciples' expenditures.

For those of ancient times whose intent was on the Way it was not proper to act like this. Moreover Tuizhi's assumption that those who record [events] have unavoidable calamity and punishment is also not so. The Historian's using names to praise and blame he even fears and doesn't dare to do. Suppose it were that Tuizhi was [] whose praise and blame makes or breaks people. With his increasing prominence his fear then ought to be still greater, so that he would complacently enter [] sit idly and wander around singing praises at court and that is all? Within the censorate further suppose it were the case that Tuizhi acted as Prime Minister, sparing or killing, sending out or calling in, promoting or demoting all of the officers in the Empire. His respect increasingly legion then

again he would complacently enter [] elegantly dine sitting idly and wander singing the praises in the inner court and outer thoroughfares, and that is all?

How is that any different than not acting as historian but being glorified with the title and profiting from the salary?

Furthermore he says if there is not calamity among men then Heaven punishes them as if they are guilty. As to these previous ancients who acted as historians likewise he is very deluded. All those who inhabit this position contemplate straightening their Way. If their Way is straight, even if they die they must not turn back. [Rather than turning back some would go to the extreme of quitting their post]. Confucius' difficulties in Lu, Wei, Chen, Song, [X], Qi and Chu is thus. The benighted feudal lords of his time were unable to use him. His dying without meeting his time is not due to his writing the *Spring and Autumn Annals*. During his time, even if he had not written the *Spring and Autumn Annals* he would have died without meeting his time. Such as the Duke of Zhou's Yi, although he recorded words and wrote down events still he met with his time and was prominent. Again you can not take it that the *Spring and Autumn Annals* implicated/burdened/indebted dragged down Confucius. Fan Ye opposed disorder, even if he did not act as historian his clan and family would have been punished. (Si)ma Qian provoked the Emperor's pleasure and anger, Ban Gu did not investigate his subordinates, Cui Hao neglected his [straight] way to fight violent slaves. All of these are not the Central Way. Zuo Qiuming becoming sick and blind came from misfortune, Zi Xia was not a historian and

also became sick and blind, one can't consider this a punishment. The others [examples Han Yu gives] all are not different from these.

Tuizhi ought to maintain the Central Way; punishment and calamity are not something/anything to be feared. As to saying that in 200 years of civil and military officials there are so many who have accomplishments to such an extent, and now Tuizhi says "I'm just one man, how can I make clarity of it all," then if those of the same occupation also speak this way, and if those who come after carrying on for those of today also speak like this, and if people everywhere all say "I am just one man," and so on til the end, who can record and transmit [history]? If Tuizhi however takes what he hears and knows and untiringly dares not to be remiss, and those of the same occupation coming after carry on as those of today and each one also takes what he hears and knows and untiringly dares not to be remiss and so all the many [historians] do not falter it will make it that end the end there is clarity. Otherwise those following popular beliefs with different words from each and every one will multiply daily so that the accomplishments mounting to lofty Heaven and Earth of which you speak with be confused and mixed up without being reliable. Those who do not have ambition are those who repress their debauchery. For those with ambition, how could they wait for people to encourage and push them and only then perform the duties of office?

And all that about ghosts and spirits, this vast absurdity and dubious lack of verifiability are clearly not the Way. Tuizhi's wisdom, and yet he is fearful of this. Today those studying like Tuizhi, writing like Tuizhi, enjoying the words

and arguments of Tuizhi, heroically proclaiming themselves enacting correct and straight behavior like Tuizhi and more which is said like this, and yet giving an account of Tang history completely cannot be commissioned to him? For brilliant Emperor and a wise prime minister to attain a historian of such talent and still it yields nothing is woeful. Tuizhi ought to contemplate how he can quickly and fruitfully carry it out. Your fearing and not daring could one day be quoted out of context and how could you respond? Behaving according to your design, now obliged to do but not doing and shirking office, this would be a great delusion among other people and later generations. One not encouraging oneself and wishing to encourage others is difficult indeed. (My Translation)

正月二十一日宗元頓首十八丈退之侍者前獲書言史事云具與劉秀才書及今方見書藁私心甚不喜與退之往年言史事甚大謬若書中言退之不宜一日在館下安有探宰相意以為苟以史榮一韓退之耶若果爾退之豈宜虛受宰相榮已而冒居館下近密地食奉養役使掌故利紙筆為私書取以供子弟費古之志於道者不宜若是且退之以為紀錄者有刑禍避不肯就尤非也史以名為褒貶猶且恐懼不敢為設使退之為御史中丞大夫其褒貶成敗人愈益顯其宜恐懼尤大也則又揚揚入臺府美食安坐行呼唱於朝廷而已耶在御史猶爾設使退之為宰相生殺出入升黜天下士其敵益眾則又將揚揚入政事堂美食安坐行呼唱於內庭外衢而已耶何以異不為史而榮其號利其祿也又言不有人禍必有天刑若以罪夫前古之為史者然亦甚惑凡居其位思直其道道苟直雖死不可回也如回之莫若亟去其位孔子之困于魯衛陳宋蔡齊楚者是也其時暗諸侯不能以也其不遇而死不以作春秋故也當其時雖不作春秋孔子猶不遇而死也若周公史佚雖紀言書事猶遇且顯也又不得以春秋為孔子累范曄悖亂雖不為史其宗族亦誅馬遷觸天子喜怒班固不檢下崔浩沽其

直以鬪暴虜皆非中道左丘明以疾盲出於不幸子夏不為史亦盲不可以是為戒其餘皆不出此是退之宜守中道不忘其直無以他事自恐退之之恐惟在不直不得中道刑禍非所恐也凡言二百年文武士多有誠如此者今退之曰我一人也何能明則同職者又所云若是後來繼今者又所云若是人人皆曰我一人則卒誰能紀傳之耶如退之但以所聞知孜孜不敢怠同職者後來繼今者亦各以所聞知孜孜不敢怠則庶幾不墜使卒有明也不然徒信人口語每每異辭日以滋久則所云磊磊軒天地決必不沉沒者且亂雜無可考非有志者所忍恣也果有志豈當待人督責迫蹙然後為官守耶又凡鬼神事渺茫荒惑無可準明者所不道退之之智而猶懼於此今學如退之辭如退之好言論如退之慷慨自謂正直行行焉如退之猶所云若是則唐之史述其卒無可託乎明天子賢宰相得史才如此而又不果甚可痛哉退之宜更思可為速為果卒以為恐懼不敢則一日可引去又何以云行且謀也今當為而不為又諉館中他人及後生者此大惑已不勉已而欲勉人難矣哉

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Index

Alphabetical Index

An Lushan.....	24p., 135, 162
ancient style.....	3p., 6pp., 16, 50p., 61pp., 69pp., 80, 83, 85, 92p., 96, 107pp., 116, 119p., 123p., 195p.
Ancient style.....	6, 16, 62, 64
Ancient Style.....	iv, 61p.
basic annals.....	22, 52, 54, 57, 130p., 161
book culture.....	9, 170p., 176, 180
Book Culture.....	221
Buddhis.....	66, 68p., 77, 113pp., 183, 195, 217, 221, 228, 234, 239, 247, 251
butterfly book.....	181
Chang'an.....	24p., 58
civil service exam.....	61, 74, 76, 136, 175
classics.....	4pp., 11p., 15, 76p., 84p., 88, 113, 120, 131, 136, 188, 190
Classics.....	110, 118, 131, 178, 188, 194, 236, 242
Collingwood.....	171
Confucius.....	6p., 38, 66p., 69pp., 73, 115, 127pp., 137, 140, 145, 212, 245
Cui Qun.....	116, 162p.
Daoist.....	67
Discussions and Judgments on Tang History.....	2, 8p., 13, 17, 27, 60, 120, 123, 137, 146, 150, 153, 157, 165, 167, 170, 189p., 192pp.
Du You.....	59, 138pp.
education.....	5, 136p., 170, 182
Education.....	187p., 221, 223p., 255
Empress Dowager.....	148, 150, 154p., 157, 160p., 169, 195
Fa Yan.....	67
Fan Zuyu.....	3pp., 8p., 13p., 16p., 27, 39, 42, 58, 133, 137, 140, 143, 145, 148, 150, 163p., 167, 179, 184pp., 192, 194p., 216
Fujian.....	172, 176
Gaozong.....	13, 20, 22p., 43, 160
Gaozu.....	9p., 18p., 21pp., 28pp., 47p., 160, 198p.
guwen.....	6pp., 10p., 61pp., 71p., 109p., 118pp., 122
Guwen.....	iv, 7, 61, 223
Han Yu.....	iv, 7, 10pp., 19, 28, 50p., 55, 61pp., 68pp., 76p., 109pp., 123p., 197, 209, 211, 213, 216, 226, 228, 231, 238, 251, 253p.
historiography.....	2p., 9, 17p., 26p., 49, 90, 126pp., 132, 135, 137, 153, 171, 196
Historiography.....	9, 61, 223, 230, 232p., 238, 240p., 246, 248, 252
Huang-Lao.....	67
Huangfu Bo.....	162pp.
imperial family.....	154, 164

Jia Dan.....	59, 139pp.
Laozi.....	37pp., 68, 117
Li Jiancheng.....	36p.
Li Linfu.....	162pp.
Li Mi.....	29p., 32, 34p., 119, 198
Li Renshi.....	22
linguistic.....	iv, 6pp., 10pp., 17, 62, 84, 100, 111, 119, 121pp., 125, 222
Linguistic.....	iv, 10, 61, 217pp., 222p., 226, 233, 236, 238, 240, 242pp., 246, 249pp., 254
Liu Zhiji.....	22p., 122, 130
manuscript.....	15, 150, 170p., 173p., 176, 181, 191
Manuscript.....	227, 232
Mencius.....	7, 66pp., 71, 73, 109, 114, 117, 127, 129, 140, 236
Ming.....	170pp., 176, 186, 224, 227, 239, 244, 252, 254
Minghuang.....	13p., 18, 43, 163p., 166pp.
minister.....	2, 5, 14p., 22, 27p., 44pp., 57, 60p., 100, 113, 115, 117, 126, 130, 133, 138pp., 147p., 152pp., 156pp., 161pp., 165pp., 193, 211, 214
Minister.....	14, 45, 70, 138p., 211
New Policies.....	4, 6, 58, 144, 152, 163, 248
New Tang History.....	3, 9p., 12, 16, 23, 25p., 28pp., 33pp., 38, 42pp., 47, 49pp., 54p., 57, 59pp., 73, 77pp., 92pp., 101pp., 107pp., 116pp., 123pp., 132p., 142p., 161, 170, 179, 189, 193, 197pp., 203p., 209
Old Tang History.....	2, 6, 9p., 12, 21, 23, 25p., 28pp., 38, 42pp., 47, 49pp., 54, 57, 59p., 78pp., 92pp., 99p., 102p., 105, 107pp., 116, 118p., 123pp., 132, 141, 143, 157, 159, 161, 170, 179, 189, 193, 197pp., 203p., 209
Ouyang Xiu.....	1pp., 6pp., 10p., 16p., 26p., 61p., 66, 70, 72, 74pp., 80, 109p., 112, 144, 156, 179, 193, 216, 223, 237
palace women.....	164, 169
Prince Ying.....	164pp.
Princess Taiping.....	168
print.....	1, 4p., 15pp., 70, 169pp., 194pp.
Print.....	15, 174, 244, 251
shi ji.....	122, 193
Shi ji.....	7, 88, 90p., 93, 126, 128, 130p., 193
Shi Ji.....	66, 70, 72pp., 76, 186, 217
Shi Jie.....	66, 70, 72pp., 76
Shunzong.....	9p., 18, 21, 25, 28, 50pp., 62, 109pp., 120, 126, 138, 140pp., 203, 221, 254
Sichuan.....	162, 176
silent reading.....	180, 196
Song.....	1, 3, 5, 7pp., 25pp., 37, 39, 43p., 49p., 61pp., 66, 69pp., 82pp., 90, 93, 95, 107, 109, 112, 116, 119pp., 125p., 132, 135pp., 141, 144pp., 150pp., 159, 161pp., 169, 171pp., 175p., 179, 182pp., 187, 189p., 209, 212, 216, 220, 223, 225p., 229p., 233, 236, 240p., 245pp., 253p.
Song Qi.....	10, 66, 75p., 78, 80, 157, 179, 184p.
Song Qi.....	61

Spring and Autumn Annals. . .	3, 7, 11, 19, 38, 70, 75, 113, 117, 123, 126pp., 137, 160, 212
Sun Fu. 2p., 8p., 13, 17, 27, 43, 47, 126, 145, 150, 152, 158p., 167, 185p., 193p., 199, 217	
Sun Fuqie.....	43, 47
syntax.....	ii, iv, 10, 12, 77p., 80p., 83p., 89p., 92pp., 99p., 102, 107, 109, 116, 119pp.
Syntax.....	iv, 77p., 90, 119, 218p., 226, 229, 231p., 243, 253
Taiping Princess.....	153, 157, 169
Taizong.....	14, 18, 20pp., 36p., 40pp., 96, 132pp., 149p., 153p., 160, 236
Taizu.....	119
Tang Mirror.....	4pp., 8pp., 13p., 16p., 27pp., 31, 33pp., 38p., 42p., 47, 49pp., 53p., 57pp., 110p., 120, 123pp., 133, 137, 140, 143, 146, 148, 150, 161pp., 165, 170, 179, 184, 186, 189p., 192pp., 197pp., 203
technology.....	15p., 170, 180p., 188, 194
Technology.....	246
veritable record.....	109
Veritable Record.....	10, 18, 20p., 25, 28, 36, 38pp., 42, 50pp., 55, 57pp., 109p., 138, 140, 160, 248
vernacular.....	119pp., 178
Vernacular.....	230, 233, 239
Wang Anshi.....	3p., 6, 12, 58, 76, 144, 152, 163p.
Wang Shuwen.....	55, 57, 59, 111, 126, 138pp., 209
Wei Shu.....	24p.
Wei Zheng.....	14, 36p., 151p., 185
Wen Daya.....	10, 28, 30, 35pp.
Wu Jing.....	23p.
Wu Zetian.....	18, 23p., 102, 153pp.
Empress Wu.....	161
Xu Jingzong.....	22p.
Xuanzong.....	24, 145, 153p., 162, 168
Yang Xiong.....	7, 65pp., 71, 73, 114, 117p.
Yao Chong.....	13p., 79, 107, 151p., 156, 158p., 161pp., 167pp., 185, 209
Yao Yuanchong.....	158, 167p.
Zhang Jiuling.....	162pp.
Zhang Yue.....	168
Zheng Xunyu.....	59, 138pp.
Zhenguan.....	36p., 153
Zhongzong.....	159pp., 168